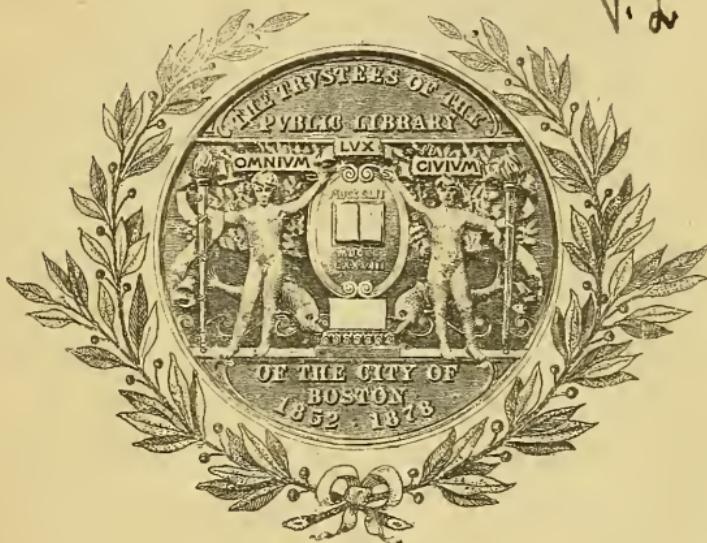


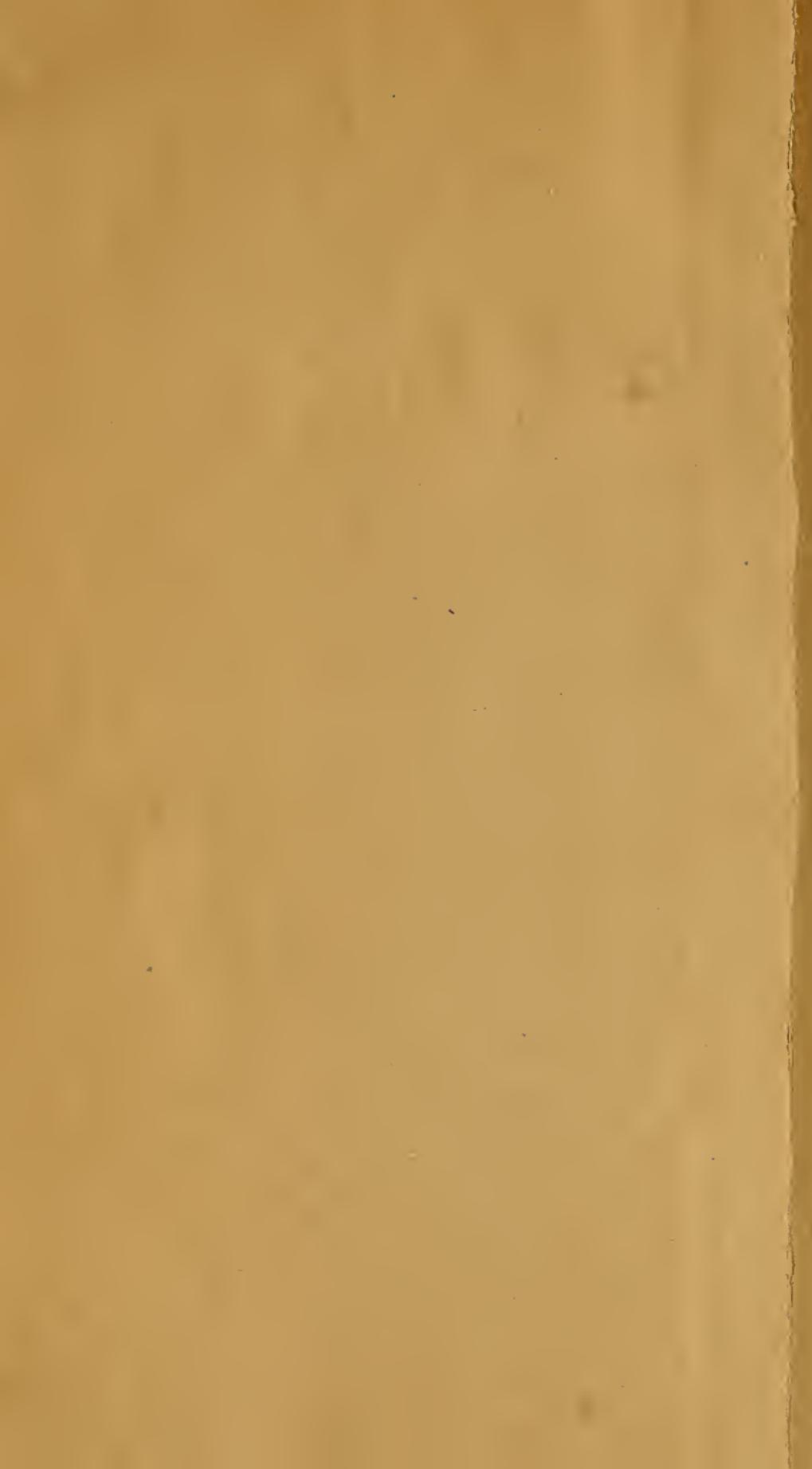


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V. 2







ESSAYS

ON

THE PICTURESQUE.

VOL. II.

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ESSAYS

ON

THE PICTURESQUE,

AS COMPARED WITH

THE SUBLIME AND THE BEAUTIFUL;

AND, ON

THE USE OF STUDYING PICTURES,

FOR THE PURPOSE OF

IMPROVING REAL LANDSCAPE.

BY

UVEDALE PRICE, Esq.

QUAM MULTA VIDENT PICTORES IN UMBRIS, ET IN
EMINENTIA, QUÆ NOS NON VIDEMUS.

Cicero.

VOL. II.

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Franklin



PREFACE.

THE three Essays which I here offer to the public, though detached from each other, and from the Essay on the Picturesque, are, in respect to the matter they contain, and the suite of ideas they present, perfectly connected. In all that I have written, I have had two chief purposes in view: the one, to point out the best method of forming our taste and judgment in regard to the effect of all visible objects, universally; the other, to shew that the same method, and the same principles, may be applied to the improvement of those particular objects, with which each man is individually concerned.

The first step towards acquiring an exact taste and judgment in respect to visible objects, is to gain an accurate knowledge of their leading characters; I, therefore, in my first Essay,

traced the character of the Picturesque, its qualities, effects, and attractions, as distinct from those of the sublime and the beautiful, through the different works of nature and art.

The next step was to shew, that not only the effect of picturesque objects, but of all visible objects whatever, are to be judged of by the great leading principles of Painting; which principles, though they are really founded in nature, and totally independent of art, are, however, most easily and usefully studied in the pictures of eminent painters. On these two points, which, I trust, I have never lost sight of in any part of my work, rests the whole force of my argument. If I have succeeded in establishing them, the system of modern Gardening, which, besides banishing all picturesque effects, has violated every principle of painting, is of course demolished.

All such abstract reasoning, however, makes but a slight impression unless it be applied: I, therefore, took examples from the works of the most

most celebrated layer out of grounds, Mr. Brown,* and examined them, and his whole system and practice, by the principles which I had before explained.

This censure of modern Gardening and Mr. Brown, drew upon me an attack from the most eminent professor of the present time, together with a defence of his predecessor. Nothing could be more fortunate for me, than such an opportunity of discussing the practicability of what I had proposed, with a practical improver of high reputation; as, likewise, of explaining and applying to particular parts of

* It has been mentioned as an objection, that Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Shenstone are in reality the most celebrated for their skill in laying out grounds, and, therefore, Painshill and the Leafowes, are the true examples of the taste of English Gardening. The acknowledged superiority of men of liberal education who embellished their own places, is strongly in favour of the whole of my argument; but has nothing to do with the objection. Poussin and Le Sueur were models of simplicity, and were the two most celebrated painters of their country: but, would it be right on that account to say that Simplicity was the characteristic of the French school? They were in painting, what Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Shenstone were in gardening—exceptions to the national taste, not examples of it.

improvement, many positions in my first work. From these circumstances of general utility, and perhaps from the animation of controversy, on a subject which, throughout this kingdom, in some measure, occupied the thoughts of every gentleman of property, the Letter to Mr. Repton was, as I have been told, more popular than the Essay.

Yet still, notwithstanding the degree of practical discussion in that Letter, it might be said, even by those who are most partial to my ideas on the subject, “it is true that you have shewn
“ the tameness and monotony of Mr. Brown’s
“ made-water and regularly sloped banks, and
“ the superior beauty and variety of those in
“ natural lakes and rivers; but by what means
“ can these last be imitated? how can those
“ numberless varieties, which often owe their
“ charms to a certain artless and negligent ap-
“ pearance, be produced by the dull mechani-
“ cal operations of common labourers? If you
“ would have us quit the present style, shew

“ us

“ is some method of practical improvement
“ which may be acted upon.” This is what I
have attempted in the first of these three Essays;
and the detail, which, from the novelty of the
plan, I have been obliged to enter into, must
be my excuse for its length. I must, however,
observe, that the subject is much more com-
prehensive than the title announces: the dis-
cussion is not confined to the banks of made-
water, nor even to those of natural rivers and
lakes, but is extended to all the natural beau-
ties and varieties of objects near the eye; which
therefore are classed by painters under the title
of *fore-ground*. All, who are in any degree con-
versant with the art of painting, know of what
consequence fore-grounds are in pictures; how
interesting they are in themselves, and what
influence they have on the effect of the whole.
If they are of such consequence to the painter,
they are of still greater importance to the im-
prover: the painter can command the other
parts of his picture, equally with the fore-
ground;

ground; can alter, or new model them as he likes; but the fore-ground, in its more extended sense, or at most the middle distance, is all that is under the controul of the improver. In this Essay I have followed the example of painters: I have bestowed particular pains on what is to be viewed close to the eye, and have worked it up more distinctly, and with greater minuteness of detail; in the hope that I may induce improvers to follow the same example in real scenery.

But, besides these fore-grounds, of which the models are in nature, there are others manifestly and avowedly artificial; which, however, on that account, are the proper fore-grounds to artificial objects: the only ones indeed strictly in character with such objects. I have, therefore, in the second Essay, examined the character of the old Italian Gardens, and the principles on which, as I conceive, their excellence is founded: I have compared them with modern gardens, and have stated what appear

appear to me their respective merits and defects, the situation in which each is most proper, and the sort of alliance that might be made between them.

From the Decorations near the House, the transition was very natural to the house itself, and to buildings in general. In the third Essay, therefore, I have considered the character of Architecture and Buildings as connected with the Scenery in which they are placed. In pursuing this enquiry, I have taken my arguments and illustrations from the works of eminent painters: examining the style of architecture and of buildings in their pictures, from the temples and palaces in those of the higher schools, to the cottages, mills, and hovels, of the Dutch masters, and applying the principles of the three leading characters discussed in my first Essay, to this particular subject; of all others the most calculated to shew their perfect distinction.

There

There are persons, for whose opinion I have a very high respect, who, though they agree with me in the distinct character of the Pictur-esque, object to the term itself; on the ground that, from its manifest etymology, it must signify *all* that can be represented in pictures with effect. I had flattered myself with having shewn, that, according to that definition, the word can hardly be said to have a distinct, appropriate meaning: by placing this matter in a different, possibly a more convincing light, I may be lucky enough to obviate their only objection. It has occurred to me, that the term (which is in effect the same in English, French, and Italian) was probably invented by painters to express a quality, not merely essential to their art, but in a manner peculiar to it: the treasures of the sublime and the beautiful, it shares in common with Sculpture; but the Pictur-esque is almost exclusively its own. A writer of eminence lays great stress on the advantage which

which painting possesses over sculpture, in being able to give value to insignificant objects, and even to those which are offensive: many such objects are highly picturesque in spite of their offensive qualities, and in a degree that has sometimes caused it to be imagined, that they were rendered so by means of them. I remember a picture of Wouvermans, in which the principal objects were a dung-cart just loaded; some carrion lying on the dung; a dirty fellow with a dirty shovel; the dunghill itself, and a dog, exhibited in an attitude that promised to add to it. These most unsavoury materials the painter had worked up with so much skill, that the picture was viewed by every one with delight. Imagine all this in marble ever so skilfully executed; it would be detestable. This certainly does tend to prove, that sculpture cannot represent with effect, objects merely picturesque. I do not mean to say, that the grave dignity of that noble art does not admit of a mixture of the picturesque;

tureſque; it is clear, however, that the ancients admitted it with a caution bordering upon timidity. The modern sculptors, on the other hand, have perhaps gone as much into the other extreme; and to that we probably owe the magnificent defects of Michael Angelo, the affectations of Bernini, and the pantomimes of ſome of his followers. It appears to me, that if the whole of this be considered, it completely takes away every objection to my use of the term; for if what I have ſtated be just, it proves that by Picturesque is meant, not all that can be exprefſed with effect in painting, but that which painting can, and ſculpture cannot exprefſe. It is, in reality, a very just diſtinction between the powers of the only two arts imitative of visible objects, with reſpect to one claſſ of those objects; and the ety‐mology of the word, as I have accounted for it, instead of contradicting, fanctions the uſe I have made of it, and the diſtinction I have given to the character.

The

The subject of modern Gardening had been so fully discussed in my first Essay, and in my Letter to Mr. Repton, that little remained to be said: in this second volume, therefore, I have seldom done more, than make some occasional remarks upon it. It may, indeed, be thought by many, that I had already bestowed more time upon it, than a particular mode of gardening in this country would justify. On this, not improbable, supposition, I must say in my defence, and, in some measure, in defence of English gardening, that the present style of laying out places, is not a mere capricious invention, but a consistent and regular system, founded on the most seducing qualities; and such as are likely to operate in every age, and country, where extensive improvement in grounds may become an object of attention—on smoothness, continuity of surface, undulation, serpentine lines, and, also, what is peculiarly flattering to the vanity of the owner—distinctness. The whole purpose of my work has been to shew—not

not that these qualities are by any means to be abandoned or neglected, but that there are striking effects and attractions in those of a totally opposite nature: and that both must be mixed in various degrees, in order to produce that beauty of combination, which is displayed in the choicest works of art and of nature. If, therefore, metaphysical enquiries were as amusing to the bulk of mankind, as they are generally dry and uninteresting except to a few speculative minds, I need not have mentioned Mr. Brown or his works; but he who makes war against pure abstract opinions, will have few spectators of his combat, few that will feel much interest in the event of the battle.

In whatever countries the qualities of smoothness, undulation, &c. are exclusively made use of, as they have lately been in this, the same wretched monotony will be the consequence. The highly decorated gardens of the villas in Italy, their statues, fountains, balustrades, all that was designed and executed during the most

most enlightened periods of art, must give way to mere turf and shrubs. The beauties of nature must experience the same fate, wherever the same system prevails: America is full of the grandest and most picturesque examples of scenery; it is a growing empire; and increasing wealth will produce increasing plans of private and public embellishment. What a pity it would be, should some future Mr. Brown smooth and slope the banks of their magnificent rivers, and form them into regular curves?

Such a style of improvement on such a scale, it might be said, the greatest advocate for the present taste would not approve: I believe, however, that there are scarcely any bounds to the sort of idolatry which prevailed, and still prevails on that subject. English gardening has been considered as an object of high and peculiar national pride; it has been celebrated, together with its chief professor,

by some of the most eminent writers of this age, in prose and in verse; and marbles, with inscriptions, have been erected to the memory of Mr. Brown and his works. Such, indeed, is the enthusiasm of his admirers, that many of them, I am persuaded, would not only approve of his system being extended over another quarter of the globe, but would wish, that “the great globe itself” could be new modelled upon that system; and be made in every part, like one of his dressed places. Could their wish be carried into effect, there would really be a very curious similarity between Mr. Brown’s finished state of the world, and the world in a state of chaos, as described by the poet—

Unus erat toto naturæ vultus in orbe.

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ERRATA.

- Page 39, line 12—*for* Van Huuffsum, *read* Van Huysum.
87, Note, line 8—*for* Vent, *read* Veut.
114, Note, line 16—*for* μονομάτες, *read* μονομάτης.
144, lines 3 and 13—*for* unimbellished, *read* unembellished
168, — 2—*for* palissades, *read* palisades.
172, — 11—*for* que, *read* quæ.
174, Note, line 5—*for* Infode, *read* Infode.
313, Note, line 9—*for* ornate, *read* ornati.
— — 11—*for* conosciutte, *read* conosciute.
317, line 9—*for* ballustrades, *read* balustrades.

A N

E S S A Y

O N

ARTIFICIAL WATER,

AND ON

THE METHOD

IN WHICH

PICTURESQUE BANKS

MAY BE PRACTICALLY FORMED.

VOL. II.

B

AN
ESSAY
ON
ARTIFICIAL WATER, &c.

IT might very plausibly be argued in defence of Mr. Brown and his followers, that however easy it may appear in theory, to make an artificial piece of water look like a natural lake, or river, and to give it such effects as would please the painter, it would by no means be easy in practice: that the mode of proceeding in the two arts, (supposing the end to be the same,) is very different, as the painter executes his own ideas, while the improver must trust to the hands

of common labourers; on which account, a regular and determined form must be given, the lines staked out with precision, and the levels taken with the same regularity and exactness. This I allow to be a real difference between the two arts, and a real difficulty in that of gardening: but if difficulties were always to stop the progress of art, and if the most obvious and mechanical system of operation were always to be adopted, because it would be the easiest, because it would require no invention to plan, nor taste to direct it,---all arts would be reduced to trades; for that which makes the distinction between them would no longer exist. With regard to Artificial Water, whenever those circumstances which can give it variety and effect shall studiously be preserved on its natural banks, (that is, on those which were in existence before the water was planned) and similar circumstances be added in other parts,

parts, I shall think highly of the taste and judgment of the professor. And should I ever see those circumstances *created*, I shall then be proud of English gardening ; and shall say that an artist, who could execute such a work by means of mechanical hands, not only had taste, but genius and invention, and that it seemed as if his spirit, like Hotspur's, had

..... Lent a fire
E'en to the dullest peasant.

I am well aware, however, not only of the intrinsic difficulty of pointing out from theory what is likely to succeed in practice, but also of the cavils and objections which may, very probably, be raised against every part of such an innovation, by those who are wedded to the old system : for I am not sanguine enough to expect, that what I am now risking, in the hope of promoting the real improvement of real landscapes, will be received by them with candour, or that any allowances

will be made in favour of the intention. On the contrary, I know that it will be looked upon as a fresh invasion of the realms of perpetual smoothness and monotony; an invasion which should be repelled by every kind of weapon.

I will begin by observing, that in order to gain a just idea of the manner in which we ought to form the banks of artificial pieces of water, the first enquiry should be, how those of natural lakes and rivers are formed; for I of course suppose, that the most admired parts of them are the proper objects of imitation. This is an enquiry which I believe has never been made with that view, and which I imagine will throw great light upon the whole subject.

It has been asked, indeed, by way of ridiculing the effect of time and accident in producing those circumstances which are generally called picturesque, ‘whether nature*

* *Essay on Design in Gardening*, page 204.

‘ is a more pleasing object in a dwindle^d
 ‘ and shrivelled condition, than when her vi-
 ‘ gour “is as great, her beauty as fresh, and
 ‘ her looks as charming as if she newly
 ‘ came out of the forming hands of her
 ‘ Creator?” I do not know in what man-
 ner Lord Shaftesbury, from whom the latter
 part of this passage is taken, may have ap-
 plied it, but as it has been made use of by
 Mr. G. Mason, it seems to mean, (if it
 means any thing) that pieces of artificial
 water, as they have generally been made,
 of one equal verdure, and smoothness, look
 as if they were the immediate productions
 of the Creator;* while natural lakes and
 rivers, (the banks of which must always be

* I remember having been told by a person of great veracity, (and who, if I am not mistaken, was present at the conversation,) that Mr. Brown, on some of his works being com-
 mended, had said, “None but your Browns and your God
 “ Almighties can do such things as these.” Mr. Mason
 seems to have justified the pretension contained in this blas-
 phemous piece of arrogance.

partially worn and broken,) shew nature in a dwindled and shrivelled condition.

How this earth did look when it was first created, or how nature then performed her operations, it would be as useless, as it is impossible to know. All we are concerned in, is the present appearance of things, and her present operations,—the constant tendency of which (a characteristic difference between them, and the supposed improvements of art) is to banish, not to create monotony ; and we really might as well reason on a supposed state of the moon, as on any supposed state of the earth when it was first created. What we *can* reason upon, and what can alone be in any degree to the purpose, is the *progressive* state of nature which we *now* observe, and which to us is creation. The most rational way, therefore, of imitating nature in those varied effects, which, under her name, are produced

produced by time and accident, would be to observe the manner in which they are progressively created; and instead of prescribing to her a set form, one tittle from which she must not presume to vary, we ought so to prepare every thing, that her efforts may point out, what, without such indications, we never can suggest to ourselves.* On this most material point, (which I shall afterwards endeavour more fully and distinctly to explain,) the whole ground-work of the imitation of nature, in contradistinction to art, is founded; and to the total neglect of it, or rather to the most determined aversion to such experiments, the tameness, monotony, and, I may add, *unnaturalness* of modern gardening must be attributed: for those higher degrees of smoothing and po-

* It can hardly be necessary to say, that I am here considering every thing merely in a picturesque light; and that I am not recommending to those, who think *only* of profit and convenience, to encourage the effects of accident: they will, with equal reason, no less studiously guard against them.

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lishing, which, when used with judgment, and confined to their proper limits, have so pleasing and dressed an appearance, have been made, (I might almost say,) the preparation for improvement, as well as the final object of it.

All artificial pieces of water must of course be stagnant; for however you may disfigure the Thames, the Wye, or smaller streams, by smoothing and sloping their banks, they will still be real rivers, or brooks. It seems to me, therefore, (as all made-water must be stagnant,) that the circumstances which relate to the formation of what may be called *accidental* pieces of stagnant water,* should more principally be attended to, than those which relate to rivers; and that the imita-

* It often happens that large pieces of water are made for the use of mills or forges, by floating a valley; where, as they are not intended for ornament, the banks are left in their original state. These, though not accidental, may be considered in the same light. The only opposition is between natural banks, and those where art has interfered.

tion of them is in general more proper and natural.

Upon the great and inimitable scale of nature, lakes are formed by many proportionate causes. As, for example, when the crater of a volcano sinks down; when a chasm remains after an earthquake; or when part of a mountain, falling across the bed of a river, creates a natural dam: one instance of which I heard from a person, who had been an eye witness of the progressive effect, soon after the tremendous cause had taken place. This might without impropriety be called the *creation* of a lake: for the only way, in which the nature we are acquainted with, does create them, is by some such accident as I have mentioned.

Artificial pieces of water must be formed by means of a head, of digging, or of both. The most beautiful (whatever be their size,) will of course be those which are formed without marks of digging, and where the sur-

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rounding ground is of a varied character, and is indented with bays and inlets variously accompanied. If such a basin be ready to receive an artificial lake, the improver has little difficulty about the form of his banks; for the water, by insinuating itself into every creek and bay---by winding round each promontory, under the projecting boughs, and the steep broken ground---by lying against the soft verdure, and upon the stony, or gravelly beech, will mark all the characters of the shore; as it will likewise mark its different heights, by a comparison with its own level. But where all is to be done by the spade, and the whole of the banks to be newly formed, the task is very different: and here it will be the proper place to enquire, by what means the varieties in the banks of natural lakes are produced. I must begin by presuming, that the improver would wish to have many of those varieties, provided they could be introduced

troduced without appearing crowded, or affected, and without injuring unity of effect and of character; for if he is content with the unity of monotony, he cannot do better than take Mr. Brown for his guide.

I think the best method of stating this matter clearly, will be to shew in what manner natural lakes, (the general form of which is pleasing, but which want those varieties I have been speaking of,) might, from natural causes, have acquired them: and then to shew, how causes, which would produce similar effects, may be prepared by art. It is easy to conceive some natural lakes, in which, though the shape of the ground, and the turns of the water, might, from their winding and undulation, be extremely pleasing, yet the monotony would be very great; as, for instance, among bare downs, or close-bitten sheep-walks: for where the soil and turf are firm, the descent

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gentle and uniform, so that the rain-water, from its spreading easily over the general surface, does not produce any breaks or gullies ---the monotony would arise, from what, in many points of view, would very justly be considered as perfections. The whole outline of the *immediate* bank in such a piece of water, would have little more variety than that of one of Mr. Brown's, though it would be free from its formality, and affected sweeps: and were natural wood to grow upon it, though that must always be a source of variety, yet alone, it would not be sufficient; for there are many varieties of a striking kind, which exclusively belong to ground, and of which wood cannot supply the place, however necessary it be to accompany, and to give them their full value. What then would give to a lake of this kind, a higher interest with lovers of painting, and with many other persons of natural

natural taste and observation? and what would be the causes of such a change? This is the enquiry I propose to make, and this will lead to the examples of that ground-work of improvement which I have already mentioned; for without examples, principles alone are in general obscure, and consequently useless.

To give rise to picturesque circumstances in such a lake, we must first suppose the soil, and the turf, to be in parts of a looser texture, and consequently to be more easily acted upon by frost and water. The winter torrents would in that case wash some of the ground from the higher parts, which by degrees would accumulate, and form different mounds immediately above the water, and sometimes little promontories, which would jut out into the lake; while in other places the soil would crumble away, and the banks be broken, and deeply indented.

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Wherever soil is drifted down, and accumulates, vegetation is particularly luxuriant: heath and furze, and, under their protection, trees and bushes will often spring up spontaneously; and every one must have observed how much more frequently they are found on the sides of gullies and ravines, than on the more open parts of hills, and how much more picturesque their effect is in such situations. Should there be any rocks or large stones, they, from the same causes, will partially be bared; and in other places the mould will be deepened upon them: in others again, the strata of sand, gravel, and of different coloured earths mixed with the tints of vegetation, will in various parts appear. The trees which often grow on the shallow soil above the rocks, will, as they grow old, shew parts of their roots uncovered, and hanging over, or clasping the rocks; while ivy (being guarded by the same brakes

brakes which nurfed up the trees) will climb over them and the rocks. In all this, I have supposed only *parts* of the banks to be so altered, and the other parts to remain in their former smoothness, verdure, and undulation. I would now ask, if two lakes, the one universally green and smooth, the other with the varieties I have described, were near each other, which would be the most generally admired? I can hardly conceive that any person would hesitate to which of the two he would give the preference. Yet it must be observed, that the picturesque circumstances I have mentioned, arise from what, in other points of view, must be considered as imperfections, and what, in their first crude state, are deformities.

I will now put the case of an improver who had been used to compare nature and pictures together, and who intended to make a piece of artificial water in a valley, the sides of which were uniformly green and

floping, like those of the lake I first mentioned : this valley I suppose him to be able to float nearly to the height he wished, by means of the dam only, but that he still would be obliged to form some part totally by digging. Such an improver would, of course, admire the last-mentioned lake, and be desirous of finding out how he might more quickly, and with greater certainty, give birth to those picturesque circumstances, which in that, must slowly have arisen from time and accident. He would probably begin, (as is very usually practised,) by taking the level of the future water, from the height of the intended head : by doing that, and by putting stakes at no great distances from each other, according to that level, he would have a very tolerable idea of the general form which the water would take. In digging out the mould for the head, it would be adviseable, not to take it from any part of the future bank, but

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some little way below the line of what the water will cover; in order that when the head is made, he may see exactly the shape that the water itself will describe. By this method, many varieties, even in the most unvaried ground, will present themselves; whereas by the usual method of preparing the outline with the spade according to the stakes, the whole of that outline must, in every instance, be stiff and formal: it would be so, were the level to be so exactly and minutely taken, that the line was precisely that which the water itself would describe; and much more so if artificial sweeps should be made. As only a small part would be to be formed by the spade, he would (as I conceive) begin by making the head, and would proceed to float the valley, before he made much alteration by digging; the water itself being his best guide with respect to any changes it might

be proper to make. He then would go round every part with a painter's, not a mere gardener's eye; and instead of examining how he might make the sweeps more regular, the bank more uniformly sloping to the water edge, and every thing more smooth, he would consider in what parts the varieties I have mentioned, could be introduced most naturally, and with most effect.

The two principal changes in the mere ground, are effected, first by removing earth *from* the banks, in order to form coves and inlets of various sizes; and, secondly, by placing it *upon* them, in order to vary their height and shape, or *against* them, to form strong projections. The first of these is done in most pieces of made water, but in so tame and uniform a manner, as to have little effect, or variety; the others, I believe, have never been attempted.

In order to keep the whole more distinct,

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I will begin by considering both the difficulty, and the practicability of breaking a uniform bank into such forms, as, when they are accompanied by vegetation, please all eyes in natural lakes and rivers. Whenever the shaping of a bank is left to common labourers or gardeners, they of course make it as smooth, and as uniformly sloping as possible. Any directions to them how to break it irregularly, would only produce the most ridiculous notches, and uneven marks of the spade, or the pick-axe; for even a painter who was used to gardening, could not with his own hand, by the immediate use of such instruments, produce any thing picturesque, or natural. As art is unable by any immediate operation to create those effects, she must have recourse to nature, that is, to accident; whose operation, though she cannot imitate, she can, in a great measure, direct. If, therefore, an improver wishes

to break the uniformity of a green sloping bank, rising however from the water with a quick, though an equal ascent, he will oblige his workmen (after having marked out the general forms and sizes of those breaks,) to cut down the banks perpendicularly, and then to undermine them in different degrees. By this method, though he be unable (very fortunately, I believe) to copy the particular breaks with which he may have been pleased, he will be certain of imitating their general character; and sometimes more happily than in the original. By this method, likewise, all sameness and formality of lines will necessarily be avoided; for were each break to be staked out in the most formal manner, each to be a regular semicircle precisely of the same dimension, and the workmen to follow the exact line of the stakes, yet still by undermining, it would be impossible not to produce variety. Then, again,

again, as monotony is the parent of monotony, so is variety the parent of variety. When by the action of rain and frost, added to that of the water itself, large fragments of mould tumble from the hollowed banks of rivers or lakes, those fragments, by the accumulation of other mould, often lose their rude and broken form, are covered with the freshest grass, and enriched with tufts of natural flowers; and though detached from the bank, and upon a lower level, still appear connected with it, and vary its outline in the softest and most pleasing manner. As fragments of the same kind will always be detached from ground that is undermined, so by their means the same effects may designedly be produced; and they will suggest numberless intricacies and varieties, and those of a soft and pleasing, as well as of a broken kind. They will likewise indicate where large stones may be placed in the

most natural and picturesque manner: for when such stones, and fragments of mould are grouped with each other, they not only have a better effect to the painter's eye, but they appear to have fallen together from the bank; whereas, without such indication, without something in the form of the ground which accords with, and accompanies them, stones placed upon mere turf, have seldom that appearance of lucky accident, which should be the aim, where objects are not professedly artificial. In making any of those abrupt inlets, he would consider what parts would most probably have been torn by floods, if the mould and the turf had been of a looser texture, and the general surface less calculated to spread the water; in order that he might give to his breaks, the appearance of having been torn by accident. He would not, however, be guided by that consideration alone, but also observe where such inlets

lets would have the most picturesque, as well as the most natural effect; how they would be accompanied, and in what manner the more distant parts might be introduced: for as all strongly marked abruptnesses attract the eye, he would endeavour by their means (as they would be newly formed) to attract it towards the most interesting objects, or at least not towards those of an opposite character.

After he had settled the principal points where he would either add, or take away earth for the sake of picturesque effect, he would then begin to dig out the soil that might be necessary for compleating the form and size he wished to give his lake. In the management of this part, which must be entirely formed by digging, lies the great difficulty; for if the line be exactly staked out, and the bank every where sloped down in that direction to the edge of the future water,

water, perfect monotony will, as usual, be the consequence. The art here consists, (by no means an easy art,) in preserving a general play and connection of outline, yet varied by breaks and inlets of different heights and characters: it consists in avoiding sameness, and insipid curves, yet in no less carefully avoiding such frequent and distinct breaks, as, from a different cause, would disfigure the outline.

Such opposite defects might perhaps be avoided, and such opposite beauties be united, were improvers to observe, and even to analyze those banks of natural lakes and rivers, in which such beauties, without the defects, do exist. No one can doubt that there are natural banks of a moderate height, where the general play of outline is preserved by the connection of the parts, and yet where, on a near approach, and in different directions, numberless breaks, inlets, and

and picturesque circumstances of every kind are perceived.

Let us suppose then that all the trees, bushes, and vegetation of every kind, were to be taken away from such a bank; what would remain? A number of rough, unsightly heaps of earth, tumbled into irregular shapes; with perhaps several stumps, roots of trees, and large stones in different parts of it. If these also were removed, nothing would be left, but broken, unequal banks, of earth. The prophetic eye of real taste might indeed, even in this rude chaos, discern the foundation of numberless beauties and varieties; but the rash hand of false taste would destroy that foundation, by indiscriminately destroying all roughness and inequality.

This sort of analysis shews what is the ground-work of picturesque improvement; but that ground-work by no means excludes the

the softer beauties which arise from smoothness and undulation. The essential difference is, that the last-mentioned qualities may be given at any time, and in any degree; whereas it is extremely difficult to return back to abruptness. The reason of this difference is obvious: all smoothing and levelling can be done in a great measure by rule, and therefore with certainty; but the effects of abruptness, though they may be prepared by design, can only be produced by accident, and cannot be renewed but by the same process.

The person therefore who has any part of a piece of water to form totally anew, would, according to my conception, do well to take any beautiful bank of a river or lake that would suit the style and scale of his ground, as a sort of model; and in some degree to analyze the component parts, and, as it were, the anatomy of it. He would
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do well to examine the ground with its breaks, cavities, and inequalities, separate from their beautiful disguise of trees and plants; and to consider the effect which such ground gives to vegetation, as well as the charm which it receives from that delightful drapery of nature. In doing this, the improver would be following the practice of the most consummate masters of another art. Who does not know that Raphael, and almost all the eminent historical painters, though their pictures were only to represent the human figure in its perfect state, yet studied and designed the anatomical position of all the bones, muscles, &c. in detail? What is still more to the point in question, the great artist whom I have just mentioned, accurately drew the naked forms of those figures, which he meant to represent with drapery; knowing how much the grace and play of that drapery, must depend on what

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was beneath, and that its folds were not meant to hide, but to indicate and adorn the forms which they covered.

The whole of this presents the idea of ground-working, in a new, and a much higher point of view; so perfectly new, that I believe nothing of the kind has hitherto been attempted, or even thought of. The difficulty is in proportion to the variety of points from which each part (as being part of a composition) must be considered. Mr. Brown never thought of picturesque composition; and where the parts (as in his banks) are all alike both in form and colour, and without any break, there can be no difficulty with regard to their connection with each other, however ill they may accord with the rest of the landscape. Monotony is, indeed, a very certain remedy against particular defects; but it may truly be said, that such a remedy is worse than almost any disease.

If then an improver were determined to avoid such unnatural monotony, to copy nature in her lucky varieties and effects, and to copy her as closely as possible, he might, by way of study, and as a trial how far an imitation could be made to resemble a beautiful original, take a sort of plan of the ground, independently of the trees, &c. He might then mark out, on the sides of the future water, the exact places where the mould which was dug out should be deposited, but without being smoothed or levelled; only directing that each heap (more or less continued and extended in length) should be raised to certain heights in different parts: all the inlets and projections might be formed upon the same principle. This, when done, would be the rough ground-work, and would have something of the general shape of what he had admired, but with unavoidable varieties.

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Such a state of ground, may be compared to the state of a picture when the artist has just roughly sketched in the general masses, and forms. To a person unused to the process, the whole appears like a heap of confusion, and of dabs of paint put on at random; just as the ground in a similar state would appear like a heap of dirt, thrown about without any meaning: and this is the state in which both painters and improvers would dislike to have their works seen. But in both it is a necessary preparation, a rude process, through which those works must pass, before they can receive the more distinct and finishing touches.

The general form of the bank, that is, of the mere ground, being made out in this rude manner, the improver would next observe what were the other circumstances (independently of trees and vegetation) which gave picturesque effect to the bank

of the natural river which he was endeavouring to imitate, and produced varied reflections in the water. These, he might probably find, were old stumps and trunks of trees, with their roots bare and projecting; small ledges of rocks, and stones of various sizes, either accompanied by the broken soil only, or fixed among the matted roots; some of them in the sides of the bank itself, some below it, and near the *edge* of the water; others *in* the water, with their tops appearing above it. In another part again, there might be a beach of gravel, sand, or pebbles, the general bank being there divided, and a passage worn through it, by animals coming to drink, or to cool themselves in the water. Many of these, and of similar circumstances, he might probably be able to add to his new-formed bank, before he began the operation of planting; nor ought he to be deterred by

the awkward naked appearance of stumps, roots, and stones half buried in dirt, but look forward to the time, when dirt and bareness will be gone, when rudeness will be disguised, and effect and variety alone remain.

Should a taste for diversifying the banks of artificial water once prevail, I am well persuaded, that such an inexhaustible fund of amusement and interest would succeed to the present dull monotony, as might tempt many into the opposite extreme. Just at present, however, there is no need of caution on that head; and the study of pictures, by means of which a taste for such varieties is best acquired, will at once be the incentive, and the corrective: it will point out many unthought-of varieties and effects, and at the same time will shew in what situations simplicity, in what richness ought to prevail; where, and how they ought to be introduced

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in succession, so as to give relief to each other.

When we consider the great and acknowledged beauty of tints, independently of form, and of light and shadow; as likewise the great variety of them which nature does, and consequently art may introduce into one scene of a river, and that with the most perfect harmony, and unity of effect---it is quite surprising that they should absolutely have been banished from the banks of artificial water, and from what are meant to be the most ornamented scenes. I am not here speaking of trees, or their various tints, of which however little advantage has been taken on the banks of water, though in other places too licentious a use is often made of their diversity; I am now speaking of the tints of stone, and of the foil in broken ground, both which have this great advantage---that, although they form a more marked contrast to vegetation than any trees

do to each other, yet they in a peculiar degree harmonize with other objects. The first of them is in many cases allowed to be highly ornamental; the latter, I believe, may be made to accord with dressed scenery, at least where the banks of water are concerned;* for where the professed aim is that of imitating a river, surely those circumstances which give such effect, variety, and naturalness to rivers, ought not to be proscribed. On the contrary, the improver ought to make them the object of his search, his study, and his imitation, not only on lakes and rivers, but wherever there are rich and varied banks; for we must be sure that water and reflection would double their beauties. All such banks afford studies for painters, either alone, or combined with water; but without some variety of tint in their accompaniments, rivers, either in nature or painting, would be most insipid objects. If there-

* Vide Letter to Mr. Repton, page 159.

fore an artist were desired to paint a scene, in which a river was to be the principal feature, and were told at the same time, that for the banks of it he must make use of no other colour than grass green, I imagine he would hardly undertake it; though he should be allowed to differ so far from Mr. Brown, as to vary the form, and the light and shadow of those banks. He certainly would wish to make use of such a diversity of tints as might create variety and interest, without glare and confusion; and the improver, instead of being *more* restrained, may be allowed to go much farther than the painter; and this is a point which deserves to be discussed.

Mr. Brown and his followers have confined themselves to the most strict and absolute monotony, in form, colour, and light and shadow: * Landscape-painters, on the other hand,

* I trust that some years hence it will appear quite surprising, that professors of the art of laying out grounds should have

hand, have availed themselves of all the varieties which suited their art; but in a painted landscape, the detail must always be subordinate to the general effect. It often happens that in a real fore-ground, numberless circumstances give delight, which the painter in a great degree suppresses; because they would not accord with the intentional neglect of detail, in the general style and conduct of his picture, nor yet with the scale of it, compared with that of real scenery. But the improver, who works with the materials of nature, may venture, though still with caution, to indulge himself in her liberties; he may give to particular parts the highest degree of enrichment, that rocks, stones, roots, mosses, with flowering and trailing plants, of close or of loose texture, have received large sums of money, for having planned and executed, what they called artificial rivers; but from which they had studiously excluded almost every circumstance of a natural one, except what they could not get rid of—the two elements of earth and water.

can create, without the same danger which the painter incurs, of injuring the whole. Such parts, when viewed at a distance, would only have a general air of richness; and that is the character which they would have in a painted landscape. When seen near, they are much more rich in detail than a painter could venture to represent them in his fore-ground: they are compositions of a confined kind, which have seldom been carefully finished as such, though often sketched as studies. But had such an artist as Van-Huuffsum, (who was both a landscape and a flower-painter,) chosen to take a compartment of that kind by itself, quite separate from the rest of the scenery, he would have represented it in its full detail; and such a picture would have borne the same relation to a landscape, as one of those groups of flowers which he so often did paint, and with such wonderful truth and splendour, bear to the general view of a garden. He would have

expressed all the brilliancy and mellowness of such a small composition; and we in dressing such parts, should endeavour to give them that mixture of mellowness and brilliancy, which would suit such a picture as he, or any painter of the same character and excellence, would have painted.

These are some of my reasons for thinking that the banks of artificial water may be more enriched, than those of rivers appear to be in painting; or, I may add, than they are in nature, if an average were taken between the plain, and the enriched parts of the most admired river. A piece of made water bears the same relation to a lake, or a river, that a sonnet, or an epigram, does to an heroic or a didactic poem: in any short poem, a quick succession of brilliant images and expressions, is not only admired, but expected;* whereas they would be ill placed

* La brevità del sonette, non comporta che una sola parola sia vana. Lorenzo de' Medici.

in the narrative, or the connecting parts of a long work. The case is particularly strong with respect to artificial water; as it is professedly ornamental, and made with no other intention.

In order to point out a few of those varieties, which appear to me most capable of being imitated by art, I will consider some of the different characters of the banks of natural rivers. The most uninteresting parts of any river, are those, of which the immediate banks are flat, green, naked, and of equal height. I have said uninteresting; for they are merely insipid, not ugly: no one however, I believe, calls them beautiful, or thinks of carrying a stranger to see them. But should the same kind of banks be fringed with flourishing trees and underwood, there is not a person who would not be much pleased at looking down such a reach, and seeing such a fringe reflected

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in the clear mirror. If, a little farther on, instead of this pleasing, but uniform fringe, the immediate banks were higher in some places, and suddenly projecting ; if, on some of these projections, groups of trees stood on the grass only ; on others, a mixture of them with fern and underwood ; and between them the turf alone came down almost to the water edge, and let in the view towards the more distant objects---any spectator who observed at all, must be struck with the difference between one rich, but uniform fringe, and the succession and opposition of high and low, of rough and smooth, of enrichment and simplicity. A little farther on, other circumstances of diversity might occur. In some parts of the bank, large trunks and roots of trees, might form coves over the water, while the broken soil might appear amidst them, and the over-hanging foliage ; adding to the fresh green,

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the warm and mellow tints of a rich ochre, or a bright yellow. A low ledge of rocks might likewise shew itself a little above the surface; the boughs so projecting over it, that the form and colour were darkly reflected. At other times these rocks might be open to the sun, and, in place of wood, a mixture of heath and furze, with their purple and yellow flowers, might crown the top; between them, wild roses, honey-suckles, periwinkles, and other trailing plants, might hang down the sides towards the water, in which all these brilliant colours and varied forms, would be fully reflected.

These are a few of the numberless varieties, which it is within the compass of art to imitate: they nevertheless have seldom, if ever, been tried, in the style, or for the purposes that I have mentioned; not even those which arise from planting. But as rocks, with cascades, have been imitated
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with success, there can be no difficulty in placing trunks, or roots of trees, or in imitating many effects of stone, or of rocks, on a smaller scale; especially where there is no motion to disturb them. With regard to the tints of soil,---if sand, or any rich-coloured earth, or loam, be placed where it will be supported by stones, roots, or ledges of rocks, (as it often is in nature) it will probably remain undisturbed; as there would be no current, or flood to affect it.

In all I have written on the subject of improvement, one great purpose has been to point out the affinity between landscape-painting, and landscape-gardening; in this case, the affinity is very close indeed. The landscape-gardener would prepare his colours, would mix and break them, just like the painter; and would be equally careful to avoid the two extremes of glare and monotony: Every aim of the painter, with respect

respect to form, and light and shadow, would likewise be equally that of the gardener.

Between the professors of Mr. Brown's school, and landscape-painters, there certainly is no kind of affinity; but there is one branch of the art of painting, from which they seem to have borrowed many of their principles, and their ideas of effect. I mean that branch, the professors of which sometimes call themselves *painters in general*, but who are more commonly known by the name of *house-painters*. The aim of a house-painter, is to make every thing as smooth and even, as the nature of what he is to work upon will allow; and then to make it of one uniform colour. So did Mr. Brown. Another part of his art, is to keep exactly within the lines that are marked out. When, for instance, he is picking in (as it is termed) the frize, or the ornaments of a ceiling,

ceiling, he carefully and evenly lays on his white, his green, or his red, and takes care that all the lines and the passages from one colour to another, shall be distinctly seen, and never mixed and blended with each other, as in landscape-painting. So far the two professors exactly resemble each other. The great difference between them is, that the former never proposed any of their works as landscapes ; whereas the latter, with almost as little pretension, have proposed their's, not merely as landscapes, but as landscapes of a more refined and exquisite kind, than those which nature, or the best of her imitators had produced.

It may be objected to the style I have recommended, that, from the awkward attempts at picturesque effect, such fantastic works would often be produced, as might force us to regret even the present monotony. I have no doubt, that very diverting performances

mances in roots, stones and rock-work, would be produced, and that alone I should reckon as no little gain; for who would not prefer an absurd, but laughable farce, to a flat insipid piece of five acts? There is, however, another very essential difference. In a made river there is such an incorrigible dulness, that unless the banks themselves be totally altered, the most judicious planting will not entirely get the better of it: but let the most whimsical improver make banks with roots, stones, rocks, grottos, caverns, of every odd and fantastic form, even these, by means of trees, bushes, trailing plants, and of vegetation in general, may in a short time have their absurdities in a great degree disguised, and still under that disguise, be the cause of many varied and striking effects: how much more so, if the same materials were disposed by a skilful artist! There are, indeed, such advantages arising from the moisture and vegetation which

which generally attend the near banks of water, that even quarry stones simply placed against a bank, however crude their first appearance, soon become picturesque; mosses and weather-stains, (the certain consequence of moisture,) soon enrich and diversify their surface, while plants of different kinds spring forth between their separations, and crawl, and hang over them in various directions. If stones thus placed upright like a wall, nay if a wall itself, may by means of such accompaniments have an effect, what an infinite number of pleasing and striking combinations might be made, were an improver, with the eye of a painter, to search for stones of such forms and tints, as he could employ to most advantage! were he at the same time, likewise to avail himself of some of those beautiful, but less common flowering and climbing plants, which in general are only planted in borders, or against walls!

we see what rich mixtures are formed on rocky banks, by common heaths and furze alone, or with the addition of wild roses and wood-bines; what new combinations might then be made in many places with the Virginia creeper, periploca, trailing arbutus, &c. which though, perhaps, not more beautiful, would have a new and more dressed appearance! Many of the choice American plants of low growth, and which love shade, such as kalmeas, and rhododendrons, by having the mould they most delight in placed to the north, on that sort of shelf which is often seen between a lower and an upper ledge of rocks, would be as likely to flourish as in a garden: and it may here be remarked, that when plants are placed in new situations, with new accompaniments, half hanging over one mass of stone, and backed by another, or by a mixture of rock, foil, and wild vegetation, they assume so new a

character, such a novelty and brilliancy in their appearance, as can hardly be conceived by those who only see them in a shrubbery, or a botanical garden. In warmer aspects, especially in the more southern parts of England, bignonias, passion-flowers, &c. might often grow luxuriantly amidst similar accompaniments; these we have always seen nailed against walls, and have but little idea of their effect, or even of that of vines and jessamines, when loosely hanging over rocks, and stones, or over the dark coves which might be made among them.

These effects of a more dressed and minute kind, might be tried with great convenience and propriety in those parts of artificial pieces of water, which are often enclosed from the pasture grounds, and dedicated solely to shrubs and verdure; while other circumstances of a ruder nature, and not so liable to be injured, might with equal propriety

propriety be placed in less polished scenes: and by such methods, a varied succession of pictures might be formed on the banks of made water. Some of soft turf, and a few simple objects; others full of enrichment and intricacy; others partaking of both: yet while monotony was avoided in the simple parts, general breadth and harmony might no less be preserved in those which were most enriched, for they *are* preserved in the most striking parts of natural rivers; which are often so full of richness, intricacy, and variety, that art must despair to rival them.

It may, perhaps, be thought, that such banks as Mr. Brown made, though very tiresome if uniformly continued, would be very proper for the simple parts of such artificial water as I have supposed: in my opinion, however, they are in one sense, almost as remote from simplicity, as from richness. Simplicity, when applied to objects in which nature is professedly imitated, always im-

plies naturalness: by which, I mean that all the circumstances, whether few, or many, should have the appearance of having been produced by a lucky concurrence of natural causes, without the interference of art. For that reason, when a river is the object of imitation, the banks ought not to be made more regularly sloping to the edge of the water, or more exactly levelled, than those of gentle rivers usually are; otherwise they betray art, and, of course, are no longer simple. Indeed, in all such imitations, the danger of betraying art should prevent too nice an attention to regular slopes, even though frequent precedents should be found to exist in nature. The case is different in the gravel walk; for that is no imitation of nature, but an avowed piece of art: avowedly made for comfort and neatness. The two sides of a gravel walk, may, therefore, be as even and smooth as art can make them, and the sweeps regular and uniform. From
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not attending to this very obvious difference, Mr. Brown has formed the banks of his rivers, just as he did the sides of his walks ; he made the curves equally regular, and the lines equally distinct.*

I shall, very probably, be accused of a passion for enrichment, and a contempt for simplicity, as I have been of an exclusive fondness for the picturesque, and of a want of feeling for what is beautiful. I have the same defence to make against both charges —the necessity of counteracting the strong and manifest tendency of the general taste towards monotony and baldness, to which simplicity is nearly allied, and into which it easily degenerates. To correct those two great defects of artificial water, it was necessary to shew the charms of variety and enrichment, and the practicability of producing them ; and as they are not meant to exclude simplicity, so neither should simpli-

* *Essay on the Picturesque*, page 364.

city exclude them: they are correctives and heighteners of each other. But it must be observed, that the effects of enrichment can be more distinctly pointed out in theory, and more certainly created in practice, than those of simplicity in its genuine sense. The charm of a simple view on a river, consists in having a few objects happily placed. A small group of trees, a single tree with no other back-ground than the sky, or a bare hill; a mere bush, a tussuck, may happen to give that character: and any addition, any diminution, might injure, or destroy, *quel tantino che fa tutto*. To leave such slight, but essential circumstances unaltered, is a matter of some feeling and judgment: to place them, still more so; and the attempt might often produce unconnected spots: but stones, rocks, roots, with trees, bushes, and trailing plants, if placed together, must at least produce richness, and variety.*

Hitherto

* That species of simplicity which arises from the objects being

Hitherto I have supposed, that in some part of the ground where artificial water was to be made, there were originally certain inequalities and varieties, of which advantage could be taken: but it might be asked, what is a person to do, whose house is situated in an absolute flat, and who still, in spite of the disadvantages of such a situation, and of the absence of all picturesque circumstances, is determined to make an artificial river? Is he to vary the heights of his banks, or to break them, when all around is smooth and level? Is he to plant bushes, or suffer them to grow, when the whole

being few, has in many cases a distinct and peculiar charm, and should in those cases be most carefully preserved. There is, however, another kind of simplicity, which is of more extensive consequence; I mean simplicity and unity of effect—

Denique sit quidvis simplex duntaxat et unum.

Wherever intricacy, variety, and enrichment disturb *that* unity, they are highly injurious; but where they do not, unless they should interfere with a simplicity so pleasing in itself, and so clearly marked as not to be mistaken, they surely in most instances will plead their own excuse.

lawn is open and cleared?---These are questions which Mr. Brown's admirers might ask with triumph; and here, they might add, the superiority of our school of improvement, and the genius of its founder, appear in the clearest light: that great self-taught master,* by reducing the banks every where to the same height, by floping them regularly, and keeping them clear from all rubbish, has preserved, as far as it is possible, that great beauty---continuity of surface; for in his artificial rivers (if we except the space which the water itself occupies) every blade of grass is seen as it was before the water was made. It must be owned, that if the pleasure of viewing a piece of scenery consisted, in being able to follow a

* Very few great self-taught masters have ever existed; none, perhaps, strictly speaking. Mr. Brown certainly is in no sense of that number; and to hear the same title given to him as to Shakespear, or Salvator Rosa, would raise our indignation, if the extreme ridicule did not give another turn to our feelings.

surface with the least possible interruption, Mr. Brown's method of making artificial water would be perfect: but if grouping, composition, partial concealment, variety, effect, be all essential requisites in the art of creating landscapes, especially where water is a principal ingredient, then a very different method must be pursued, even where the whole country is perfectly flat. In reality, by sacrificing the effect of water to the surface of grass, the character of a meadow, or lawn, is destroyed, yet that of a lake or river is not obtained: for nothing can more completely separate and disunite the two parts of a meadow, than a naked glaring piece of water; and nothing can be less like a beautiful river or lake, than such a pretended imitation.

In my opinion, he who makes a piece of water, whatever may be its situation, ought, in almost all cases, to consider *that* as the principal

principal object of his attention: and instead of sacrificing its character and effects to a false idea of continuity and union, ought to sacrifice, if necessary, many real beauties, if he thereby could obtain such scenes (considered merely in respect to their immediate banks) as we are oftentimes delighted with in natural lakes and rivers. It happens, however, very fortunately, that many of those circumstances which render them so beautiful in themselves, serve likewise to unite them with the rest of the scenery, and to give greater effect and variety to the more distant parts. Bare shaven banks, form distinct lines, which every where mark the exact separation of the two elements: but partial concealments, are no less the sources of connection, than of variety, effect, and intricacy; for by their means the water and the land, the nearer and the more distant parts, are blended and united with each other.

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The effects of water are always so attractive, that wherever there is any appearance of it in a landscape, whether real or painted, to that part the eye is, irresistibly, carried, and to that it always returns. All the objects immediately round it are consequently most examined: where they are ugly, or insipid, the whole scene is disgraced; but where they are interesting, their influence seems to extend over the whole scenery, which thence assumes a character of beauty that does not naturally belong to it.

This strong attractive power of water, while it shews how much the immediate banks ought to be studied, suggests, likewise, another consideration, with regard to its position in the general view from the house. In places where the views are confined to the nearer object, the water (as at Blenheim) frequently occupies a very considerable portion of the scenery, and mixes with

with almost every part of it. But where, from a high station, the eye surveys a more extended country, the appearance of water which may be produced by art, bears no proportion to that extent, though it may greatly enliven parts of it. In such situations, therefore, the placing of the water ought very much to be guided by the objects, (both the near and distant ones,) to which it will serve as a sort of focus. It may happen, for instance, that the parts which would be most easily floated, are placed amidst open common fields, or amidst hedges without trees, or, what is worse, with stripped elms, or pollard willows; that they are backed by hills of bad shapes, and divided by square map-like enclosures. A piece of water in that situation would infallibly draw the attention towards those objects, which otherwise might have escaped notice; and the eye, though it might be hurt by them, will still

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be forced towards that part: for our eyes, like moths, will always be attracted by light, and no experience can prevent them from returning to it. On that account, the position of water can never be a matter of indifference. If the size of it be considerable, and the objects in that direction ugly, or uninteresting, it will make their defects more conspicuous, but by no means compensate those defects. On the other hand, the smallest appearance of water, a mere light in the landscape, may answer a very essential purpose—that of leading the attention to those parts which are most worthy of notice: and, therefore, wherever there are the happiest groups of trees, or buildings, the richest distances, the most pleasing boundaries of hills, or mountains, in that direction the water, if possible, should be placed, so as to blend with them into one composition. It will then serve, not merely as a brilliant

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light in the landscape, but likewise as a bond which unites all those parts together; whereas, if it be placed at a distance from them, the eye is distracted between objects which it would like to fix upon, and a fascinating splendour, the influence of which it cannot resist.

I now return from this more general consideration, to that of the banks of water in a flat; and where also the ground through which it is to be made, not only is without any variety of heights and breaks, but even without any thickets, or bushes, of which advantage might be taken, for the purposes of concealment and of naturalness. By what means then could a piece of water be formed in such a situation, so as to be interesting in itself, and to give an interest to all that surrounds it? I shall in this enquiry pursue something of the same method I have already taken, and consider how a natural river, according

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to its different accompaniments, might look in such a situation. Let us, therefore, suppose, a natural river, about the size of the generality of artificial ones, to pass slowly through the middle of a large flat meadow, totally without trees or bushes of any kind; but having the part of its banks between the general level of the grass, and that of the water, worn and broken in various degrees. Such a river would certainly have very few attractions, but still the banks would have some diversity, though of a rude and uninteresting kind. If one of Mr. Brown's followers were desired to dress such a scene, he would, of course, slope all those banks regularly and uniformly to the edge of the water: an operation, by which they would lose indeed their rudeness, but with it, all variety of surface. Again, the banks of the natural river might have many sharp angular breaks, and sudden turns, which not

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being disguised and softened by trees or bushes, would give a harshness to the outline. Those of Mr. Brown's improved river, would, on the other hand, be moulded into regular curves, equally undisguised; which would, therefore, appear in all their insipid sameness: and this, I think, is a fair parallel between one of nature's worst rivers, and the best of Mr. Brown's. Such, then, would be their respective appearance when naked and undisguised; but what would it be, if two such banks were left to grow wild for some years, and the wood which might spring up, preserved from cattle? In the irregular bank, the abruptnesses and sharp turns would in some places be concealed or disguised by boughs hanging over them from above; in others, by bushes and underwood shooting upwards from the middle and lower parts, or from heaps of the fallen mould: they would therefore

therefore occasion great variety and intricacy, while their original crudeness and deformity would be hidden; but in the other, the regularity of the curves, and the monotony of the slopes, would always be perceived; and this difference between them would be visible, even if both banks were covered with wood. It may, likewise, be observed, that in such a case, the improver might easily give smoothness to any parts of the rough bank, on which he wished to impress that character, and thereby augment the general variety; but he would find it much more difficult to break the inveterate sameness of the other.

To take it again in another light; suppose that in the same level country, the windows of the house looked down the reach of a natural river, both the banks of which were completely fringed with flourishing trees and underwood; the ground on each side being a flat meadow as before. This total

fringe, though in many respects very beautiful, the owner might think too uniform and absolute a screen. He therefore would observe what parts of it should be thinned, or cut down, in order to let in the most interesting circumstances of the ground behind, whether trees, buildings, distant hills, or other objects; he might in some places smooth and slope the banks, though not in too gardener-like a style; and in others, allow the trees he had cut down to spring up again, as a present rich covering, which might afterwards be thinned and grouped at pleasure. In examining the banks on which this fringe was growing, he might perhaps find that some parts of it, from whatever cause, whether of soil having been thrown up, or from original formation, were higher than the rest; and these risings, he might find, not only produced a pleasing variety when seen from the river, but likewise made a rich and varied termination in the view from

from the meadow towards the water. Would he in such a case have a thought of destroying the risings, of grubbing up the wood, and levelling the ground, in order to preserve every where the level of the meadow? — In searching amidst the thick underwood, he might find large roots of trees, which projected over the water, supporting the mould above and behind them; while the water had washed away that below, and formed a deep hollow beneath. By partially clearing away some of the boughs which concealed these roots, he might give to the recesses below them a still greater appearance of depth, and lead the eye towards their dark shadows.* Were he to find any large stones in the banks, or below them near the water edge (and such are not unfrequently

* Were there no other objection to Mr. Brown's pieces of made-water, than that they had no deep shadows, that would alone be a sufficient condemnation. I will not trust myself to speak of their effects; it would lead me too far from the present subject.

to be found even in flat situations,) he would hardly think of enquiring how they came there, and whether they belonged originally to the soil, but consider only how he could profit by them, or by any other circumstances which might produce effect and variety, without any manifest absurdity, or unnaturalness.

If, then, it be acknowledged that these varieties do constitute some of the principal charms of natural rivers ; if, where they exist, are happily disposed, and mixed with verdure and smoothness, not only the river itself is beautiful, but the whole country from its influence seems to partake of that character ; and if, on the other hand, where there is a total want of them, there must be total monotony,—what should prevent us from endeavouring to imitate that which is at the same time most natural and most delightful, instead of making something, which has no type in nature,

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and ought to have none in art? Can it be said that there is any real difficulty in executing any part of what I have described, or indeed much more than I have mentioned? I say in executing, for difficulty there certainly is in planning and directing what is to be a principal feature in a real landscape.

I have now very fully explained my ideas with respect to the manner in which the banks of water may be prepared, so that time and accident may produce in them those varieties and breaks, which, when properly accompanied, are so much admired by painters. I have likewise shewn how other circumstances, usually called picturesque, such as rocks, stones, trunks and roots of trees, &c. may be added to them, and how they may be blended with what is smooth and undulating. The last finishing, that which gives richness, variety, effect, and connection to

the whole; that which adds a charm to all other varieties, and which alone, when judiciously managed, will in a great degree compensate their absence, is planting. The connection, and partial concealment arising from wood, which are so necessary and interesting in every part of landscape, are peculiarly so in the banks of water; but the degree of concealment which is required for the purpose of softening rudeness, or disguising monotony, cannot well be effected without a large proportion of trees of a lower growth. Although I have dwelt so much on this subject in a former part,* I shall have occasion not only to apply what I have there said to the particular points I am now discussing, but also still farther to enlarge upon it.

In forming the banks of artificial water

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 227 of the first Edition, and 309 of the second.

through

through a flat piece of ground, those who absolutely condemn Mr. Brown's regular curves and slopes, might still widely differ from each other as to the degree, and the sort of variety that could with propriety be introduced. One improver might like every kind of enrichment, even in such a situation; another only some variation in the height of the banks: a third, again, might think that any such variation of the ground itself would not accord with the flatness of the surrounding country; and so long as artificial monotony and baldness are excluded, each of these styles may have its merits and its beauties. But the improver who was least fond of variety, and who objected to any difference of height in the banks themselves, might still wish to break and conceal their uniformity by means of wood: were he, however, to plant forest trees alone, at the distance they ought to remain

when full grown, they would for many years look poor and scattered; and were he to plant a number of them together, they would, if left thick, as they usually are, be drawn up to poles, and the sameness of the ground beyond them would be seen between their stems. Should he cut many of them down, and let the underwood grow, still that method (though a very good one) would not in some respects answer the purpose so well as a mixture of such plants as by nature are apt to grow bushy: for the underwood of forest trees would in a few years grow tall and bare; would require to be again cut down, again to be guarded from animals; whereas thorns, hollies, &c. continue thick and bushy, and, what is of great consequence, always subordinate to the higher growths. Besides, when forest trees only are planted, they are seldom thinned in a sufficient degree. Every planter has felt,

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when three or four oaks, beeches, or chefnuts, all healthy and beautiful, are growing near each other, how painful it is to determine which to leave, and which to cut down; so much so, that in spite of conviction they generally are all left to spoil each other: but in the method of planting that I have advised, should any one of them be totally surrounded by thorns, elders, junipers, &c. and should they be all left together in a mass, the injury arising from such neglect would comparatively be immaterial. If a mixture of low bushy plants will effectually disguise a level surface, it is no less requisite where any risings are artificially made in the bank; for the crude manifest attempt at artificial variety, is much worse than natural unaffected sameness; and, lastly, where roots and stones are placed for picturesque effect, a disguise of low, bushy, and trailing plants, is still more necessary.

But the advantage of this method of plant-ing

ing extends much farther than the immediate banks; and as the character of water, (considered as part of a composition) is very much affected by all the grounds which surround it, and with which it can be combined into the same landscape, some additional remarks on the planting of such grounds may not be improper in this place: Indeed, as the principal change in all places is made by means of planting, the superiority of this method can hardly be placed in too many points of view. Should then the ground on each side of the water be either flat, or, what perhaps is scarcely less unvaried, uniformly sloping, still a great degree of variety and intricacy may be given to it, by means of the style of planting I have just mentioned. There are, for instance, many parts of forests, quite flat, yet full of intricacy and variety: from what cause? certainly from the mixture of thorns, yews, hollies, hazles, &c. with the larger trees; these form thickets, which often

so variously cross behind each other, that the lawns among them are bounded, yet no one can ascertain the lines of the boundary; the eye is limited, yet appears to be free and unconfined, and wanders into the openings of the thickets themselves, and those between them. Contrast all this with a lawn of Mr. Brown's; the uncertain and perpetually varying boundary of the one, with the regular line of the plantation, or belt that hems in the other: contrast the thickets themselves, each a model of intricacy and variety, with the clump of large trees only, as perfect a model of baldness and monotony. By planting a mixture of the different growths, sometimes in large extended plantations, to be separated afterwards into groups and thickets, with various inlets and openings; sometimes in smaller masses, arranging them so as to cross, and as it were to lap over each other, with paf-
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fages of various breadths between them,--- the variety of forest lawns might be given to those near a house, yet the neatness of a dressed lawn be preserved; and water so backed, would not need a continued fringe, for the purpose of concealing what was behind. Such future groups and thickets, (as they must be prepared by being dug and fenced,) will at first look heavy and formal, but the circumstance of the different growths, is a sure preservative against the incurable sameness, and insulated appearance of clumps, as they are usually planted and left.

The same reflection, which before occurred in describing the immediate banks, again occurs on a more extended scale; namely, that this method, which can give such diversity to unvaried ground, is, if possible, still more useful where there are slight inequalities in the midst of a large space of lawn.

lawn. A few forest trees placed on such small swellings, look meagre, and scattered; a number of them heavy and uniform; and neither of them mark or accord with the character of those lesser risings: but the lower and more bushy plants, both agree with the size of such swellings of ground, and humour and characterize their undulations; while a few of the larger trees mixed with them, give variety and consequence to the general outline. These massive, yet diversified plantations, form divisions and compartments, on which the eye can dwell with pleasure; they vary, without stuffing up, the large uninteresting spaces of which lawns and parks are too often composed, and from which arises that bare and meagre sameness, so opposite to the richness and diversity of many of the forest lawns.

It may, perhaps, be said, that thickets, though very proper in forests, and, perhaps,
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in parks, are not in character with a lawn, or with such dressed ground as artificial water is generally made in. This opinion I wish to examine; for the notion that a lawn, or any meadow, or pasture ground near the house, ought to be kept quite open and clear from any kind of thickets, has been one very principal cause of the bareness I have so often had occasion to censure. It is not improbable that the first idea of a lawn may have arisen from the openings of various sizes which are found in forests and old parks, and that these openings were the original objects of imitation; in copying which, improvers have had the same degree of success, as in their imitations of natural rivers, and from the same cause,---that of never studying their models. If it be true, that many of these forest lawns have every variety that can be wished for in the disposition of their boundaries, in their groups,

groups, and single trees; that the yews, thorns, hollies, &c. produce richness and concealment, and often (as far as they are concerned,) a very dressed appearance; if the larger trees add loftiness and grandeur, while the frequent change from thickets, to trees and bushes, either single, or in open groups, no less produces variety---what is the objection to making such scenes the principal objects of study and imitation, where similar effects are meant to be created, and where they certainly would be admired? Should it happen, for example, that in parts of the rising ground of a highly dressed lawn, groups of thorns and hollies were mixed with the oaks and beeches, is there any one with the least taste for natural beauties, who would totally extirpate them, and clear round all the larger trees? is there any one who would not delight in such a mixture? who would not shew it, as one of

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the most pleasing objects in that part of his place? If so, why not strive to create, what we should be proud of, if placed by accident? With regard to thickets not being suited to dressed scenery, I will ask, what are those clumps of shrubs and trees of different growths, which at Blenheim, and other places, are in the most polished parts of the garden? they are thickets in point of concealment, and of variety in the outline of the summit, and so far they differ from those clumps which are planted with the larger trees only; their difference from the forest thicket, is, that they are chiefly composed of exotics, and that, from the original line of the digging being preserved, and from their never having been thinned by means of cutting, or of the bite of animals, they remain in one uniform round or oval. Were such clumps thinned, and inlets made by a judicious improver, and were the line of digging effaced,

effaced, they would soon have the variety of forest thickets: and on the other hand, were a forest thicket dug round, planted up, and preserved, it would soon have the heaviness and formality of a garden clump. The forest thicket has, therefore, a great advantage in point of variety, and playfulness of outline; and, perhaps, the mixture of oak and beech, with yew, thorn and holly, (not to mention other varieties,) may not be inferior in real beauty, to any mixture of exotics. What then ought to be the difference between the forest thicket, and that which might be introduced in a lawn? Exactly the difference which characterizes the two scenes. The one is wild, rough, and neglected: the other smooth and cultivated. In the lawn, therefore, brambles, and briars that crawl on the surface,* and whatever gives a rude and neglected

* I have confined my remark to those plants which crawl on the surface, as it is from that circumstance that they have a rude

neglected look, should be extirpated and the grass encouraged; and by such means, richness, variety, and concealment, may be created, or preserved, while the rude, entangled look of a brake is destroyed. But even if it were a settled point, that nothing but timber trees ought to have place in a lawn, still the best method of raising them, so as to produce present effect without future injury, would be to mix a large proportion of the lower growths, till the timber trees were grown to a sufficient size; and then—if he who should then view their effect altogether could give such an order—every thing round them might be cleared.

and neglected appearance; however, they may suit the painter as a fore-ground. But where any flexible plants have climbed up trees, they are highly ornamental, nor can any thing be richer or gayer, than wild roses, or clusters of berries, intermixed with foliage, and hanging from it in festoons. Then as the grafts may be kept neat about their stems, they do not give the idea of slovenly neglect.

In speaking of artificial hillocks,* I have confined myself to those which might be made on the immediate banks of water. It would certainly be much more hazardous to try such an experiment on a more extended surface: still, I think, that where a great deal is to be dug out, in order to make the water,—where there is more earth than is wanting for the head,—and where the ground is unvaried,—such artificial risings might be made with good effect, and without appearing unnatural. I judge, in some degree, from what I have seen: it sometimes happens in stony arable

* The word *hillock*, is, I believe, in general confined to *natural* swellings of ground. I have, however, the authority of Mr. Mason for using it in this sense, even without the addition of the word *artificial*. In the second book of the English Garden, where he is giving instructions how a flat scene may be improved, he observes that the genius of such a scene may be “lifted from his dreary couch” by

“ Pillowing his head with swelling *hillocks* green.”
My instructions have the same tendency, though delivered in humbler language.

grounds, that the stones, with clods of earth, weeds, and rubbish, have been heaped up at different times, and have formed irregular hillocks, which, being unfit for cultivation, remain untouched; and trees, bushes, fern, and gorse, spring up in many parts of them. These hillocks are artificial: but not being intended for beauty, they are neither artificially formed, nor planted; and consequently have the perfect appearance of being natural. I have often been struck with the great richness of such banks at a considerable distance, and from a number of points; and have been surprized on examining them, to find how slight a rise of ground, when planted by the hand of nature, seemed to elevate, and give consequence to that part: I have been quite deceived in regard to their depth, have gone round them, and though undeceived as to the reality, still observed with pleasure the same appearance. Such

is the effect of these artless plantations, the fruits of accident, but which it would be the perfection of design to imitate. Art generally opposes either a uniformly thick, and therefore a suspected screen, or one, which (to use Milton's language), is thin with excessive thickness,* and through which, the ground behind is unpleasantly discovered; but in these works of accident, the many partial openings and inlets seem to invite the eye, while something still prevents it from penetrating too far into their recesses. Many different hillocks have been raised by art, in various ways, and for various purposes: some of them without any connection with the surrounding land; yet still, when enriched and disguised by wild, irregular vegetation, they have, in almost every instance, something in their appearance, which few would wish to part with. There are often broad and high ridges, where meers and

* "Dark with excessive bright." *Paradise Lost*, book 3. l. 380.

hedge-rows have been, that interrupt the natural flow of the ground, but which under similar circumstances have an equally good effect: and I have particularly observed meadows near rivers, uniformly surrounded with banks of that kind, which yet formed the most striking and pleasing features in the whole landscape.

All these circumstances might certainly be imitated, and improved upon without difficulty; and it is no less certain that the simplest execution of any of the banks which I have described, would be a very essential improvement to the sides of many pieces of made water. I am very far, however, from recommending frequent and wanton attempts to change the surface of ground, as I hold them to be very dangerous on many accounts: for besides the danger of their having an unnatural character, if not judiciously managed, heaps of earth might sometimes affect the drainage of the land; a point

of equal consequence both to beauty and profit: but I wished to shew by what means the different varieties in ground, whether natural or artificial, abrupt or gradual, connected or disjoined, may at once be disguised, and set off to the greatest advantage. I wished also to suggest, that when a quantity of mould must somehow be disposed of, it had better be employed in creating, and increasing variety, than (according to the usual practice) in destroying that which does exist, by filling up all inequalities, without distinction, and reducing the whole to the strictest and stiffest monotony.*

It

* The folly of attempting to create variety and picturesque effect, by means of single objects, without connection, or congruity, is very pointedly ridiculed by the Abbé de Lille, in his poem on Gardens. The two lines, like most of his verses, are easily retained, and will be recollect'd with equal pleasure and profit—

Et dans un sol égal, un humble monticule
Vent être pittoresque, et ne'st que ridicule.

All that I have said, will serve to strengthen, not to counteract, the force of that just satire, and the principle on which it is founded; for I have shewn the method, by which connection may be restored, and incongruity veiled and disguised, even

It may naturally be expected, that having entered into so much detail with respect to the banks of artificial lakes and rivers, I should say something of their general shapes. Wherever a piece of water is principally to be made by floating the lower ground, the water itself will in many parts take the best of all possible forms; and will always give the best indications in what other parts, and in what degrees, alterations and enlargements should be made. In one opinion I am more and more confirmed; namely, that the character of a lake, and not that of a river, should in most cases be the object of imitation. A lake admits of bays and inlets in every direction; and where the scene is confined, every source of variety should be sought after. A lake is a whole, and that whole, upon a smaller scale, may be completely imitated: but of a river, only where such hillocks had been formed, as never ought to be formed for beauty; and by which they may in a great degree be united with the rest of the landscape.

one or two reaches can be imitated; and then it must stop. Now one of the charms of a river, besides the real beauty of each particular scene, is the idea of continuance, of succession; that idea, that hope and expectation, give an interest to the scenery of a river considered generally, though many parts taken singly may be uninteresting. Bays, inlets, and promontories form a principal beauty in lakes, but they would counteract that idea of continued motion and progress, with which continuity of banks so well accords; and even where, for a certain space, a river becomes stagnant, (the only part which art can properly imitate) still we retain the knowledge, and, in some degree, perceive the effect of its real progression. But where we know that no motion, no progression, exist in any part, it surely is right to compensate the want of those qualities, by others which we can command, and which are so much in unison with

with the character of still water; for those lakes which are most admired by painters, are remarkable for the variety and intricacy of their shores.

Excellent hints with regard to the general forms of lakes, might be taken from pools on a scale so very diminutive, as to excite the ridicule of those who attend to size only, and not to character. But as Gainsborough used to bring home roots, stones, and mosses, from which he formed, and then studied fore-grounds in miniature; and as Leonardo da Vinci advised painters to enrich and vary their conceptions by attending to stains and breaks in old walls, that is, to the lucky effects and combinations which in the meanest objects are produced by accident and neglect,---I may venture to recommend many of the pools in old gravel pits on heathy commons, as affording most useful studies in this branch of landscape-gardening. Such lakes in miniature strongly point

point out the effect of accident and neglect, in creating varied and picturesque compositions, with the advantages that might be taken of such accidents ; and they, likewise, shew, what is by no means the least instructive part, the process by which such forms and compositions are undesignedly produced. The manner in which these pits are formed, seems to be nearly this. After a certain quantity of gravel has been dug out, and it becomes less plentiful, the workmen very naturally pursue it wherever it appears ; leaving heaps of mere mould in the middle, and projections of it on the sides : and as they want the gravel and not the surface, they pick it from under the turf, which by that process is undermined, and falls in, in different degrees, and in various breaks. Sometimes the turf and the upper mould are taken off, in order to get at the gravel which lies beneath, and are cast upon the surface of another part, the height of which

is consequently raised above the general level; while in places where roads had been made to carry out the gravel, the ground is proportionably low, and the descent gradual. By means of these operations, in which no idea of beauty or picturesque composition was ever thought of, all the varieties of smooth turf, of broken ground, of coves, inlets, projections, islands, are often formed; while heath, broom, furze, and low bushes, which vary the summit, are in proportion to the scale of the whole: and that whole is a lake in miniature, of transparent water, surrounded by the most varied banks. I have often thought, that if such a gravel pit with clear water were near a house, the banks of it might, with great propriety and effect, be dressed with kalmneas, rhododendrons, azaleas, andromedas, without any shrub too large for its scale; and that so beautiful a lake in miniature might be made, with every thing in such exact

exact proportion, as to present no bad image of what one might suppose to be a full-sized lake in Liliput.

But there are likewise other pools on a scale equally diminutive, the character of which forms a singular contrast to such as I have just mentioned: for as in those a great part of the beauty arises from the proportion between the size of the water and that of its accompaniments; so in the others, the striking effect is produced by their disproportion. These last are found in forests, and in woody commons, where the ground is bold and unequal. In such places it often happens that a high broken bank enriched with wild vegetation, sometimes with a single tree upon it, sometimes with a group of them, hangs over a small pool: * in a scene of that kind, the very circumstance of the

small-

* This style of scenery is very poetically and characteristically

smallness of the water gives a consequence to the objects immediately round it, which a larger expanse would diminish in proportion to that expanse. Another great source of effect arises from the large mass of shadow, which from the overhanging bank and trees, is reflected in so small a mirror; and also from the tints of vegetation, of broken foil, and of the sky, which are revived in it.*

All

cally described by Mr. Mason in the first book of his English Garden:

Nature here
Has with her living colours form'd a scene
Which Ruyfdal best might rival—chryftal lakes,
O'er which the giant oak, himself a grove,
Flings his romantic branches, and beholds
His reverend image in the expanse below.

* The circumstance of tints being *revived* by means of water, is little attended to but by painters. It is a rule in their art, that no tint should be introduced into a picture, without its being revived again in other places; in short, that it should in a manner echo from one part of the composition to another, and that no considerable part should be without it: a rule, by no means founded on the mere practice of the art, but on repeated observations of the most harmonious combinations in nature. Now, water, by repeating not only the brilliancy, but the

All these circumstances give a surprising richness and harmony to every thing within the field of vision, as you look at such a composition; the water being as it were the focus in which that richness and harmony are concentered, and whence they again seem to expand themselves on all that surrounds it. In many gentlemen's places there are opportunities of producing such effects of water with little expence or difficulty, in no

the hue of the sky, acts as a powerful harmonizer in respect to colour, and for that reason few compositions are totally without it. A small quantity, however, will answer that purpose; often better than a larger expanse, the brilliancy of which might be too powerful for the rest of the picture. This will account for the seemingly insignificant bits of water that we see in pictures, and also for the pleasure which lovers of painting feel, when after viewing any natural scenery deficient in that respect, they catch a glimpse of water, however trifling: a pleasure which arises not merely from its brilliancy, but also from that revival and renewal of colour, by means of which, the beauty and harmony of the whole is so greatly augmented.

These remarks may be said to belong more immediately to the art of painting; but whatever tends to add new pleasures to those which we already receive from the common objects and effects of nature, cannot be foreign to the purpose of this work.

part of which a good imitation of a lake or river on a large scale, could be made at any expence. There are hollows, for instance, in sequestered spots, partly surrounded by such banks as I have described, which might easily be made to contain water: there is often a small stream near such a spot, running without any particular beauty in its own bed, but which, by an easy change in its course, might be made to fall into the hollow; and thus appear to be, and really become, the source of the still water beneath. These easy and cheap improvements would give a new and lively interest to the most interesting woodland scenery, and would afford opportunities of trying a variety of picturesque embellishments.

Some of the most eminent painters, not only of the Dutch and Flemish, but likewise of the Italian school, were particularly fond of scenes of this kind; and our own Gainsborough,

borough, of whom we have so much reason to be proud, no less delighted in painting them. The esteem of such artists is very much in favour of the scenes themselves, but the principle, on which they give so much pleasure to those who have learnt to observe effects in nature, by means of those which are expressed in painting, has been often displayed in landscapes of the highest style, and where the scenery is far from rude;*

and

* A very striking example of the effect of this principle is displayed in a picture of the greatest of all landscape-painters—Titian. It was in the Orleans collection, and represents the bath of Diana, with the story of Acteon. The figures, which are either in, or close to the water, bear the same kind of proportion to its size, as a tree of Ruydsdal, or Gainsborough, does to the small pool over which it hangs. Many of the same effects are produced by the disproportion of their size to that of the water, by their nearness to it, and by the consequent fulness of their shadows, and brilliancy of their reflexions. The richness, glow, and harmony which arise from these circumstances, and which, from the revival of the colours interspersed in various parts of the picture, seem to diffuse themselves from the water over the whole of it, are so enchanting, as to justify the most extravagant encomiums of his countrymen. I must, however, limit this assertion to his landscapes; for there is a compliment

and I am glad to cite such great and various authorities, for paying more attention to the effect and the accompaniments, than to the extent of water, as the opposite idea has universally and exclusively prevailed.

From that predominant passion for extent, and from that miserable, undistinguishing taste for continuity of surface, many beautiful little pools, in the most romantic parts of parks, have been filled up, and the ground levelled; I hope, however, that such as remain may escape, and serve as models for others that will be made.

I have already mentioned the hints that may be taken from pools in old gravel pits on flat commons: two other circumstances

in a Venetian book to one of his figures, which the most sanguine admirer of the art of painting cannot quite assent to. After praising many parts of a famous work of Titian at Venice, the Venetian author says, "at the bottom of the steps is an old woman with eggs—*affai piu naturale che se fosse viva*—much more natural than if she was alive."

have

have particularly struck me in viewing them: one, that variety of height may be given artificially to the banks of water in a flat, provided those banks be so cloathed with vegetation, as to prevent the ground immediately behind them from being distinguished. The other, that in many cases the character of the banks, and of course that of the water, is spoiled, in consequence of the very usual ambition of raising the level of the water as high as possible, without any attention to the varieties in the ground which it will cover; for had any constant stream been carried into one of these pits, the ground made up where it was low, and the water raised to the level of the general surface, all the variety and intricacy would have been destroyed. This accounts for the monotony of rivers that flow through a continued plain, and near to the top of their banks: Where rivers descend from a hilly

country into a flat, the floods, even there, deepen their channels, and thereby give rise to many varieties, which never can exist where the stream is nearly on a level with the grafts;* and this suggests to me a remark not unworthy the consideration of improvers: when the water is raised to the level of the general surface, you can only vary the banks by *raising* that surface; but when the water is less high, you can vary the banks by lowering, as well as by raising them.

Islands in artificial water, have, in many instances, been so shaped, and so placed, as to throw a ridicule on the use of them:

* The varieties which the impetuous motion of water occasions, and the means by which it produces them, are very distinctly marked in a Poem of Macchiavelli, called *Capitolo della Fortuna*.

Come un torrente rapido, ch'al tutto
Superbo è fatto, ogni cosa fracassa
Dovunque aggiugne il suo corso per tutto;
E questa parte accresce, e quella abbassa,
Varia le ripe, varia il letto, il fondo,
E fa tremar la terra d'onde passa.

but

but if we once allowed ourselves to argue from abuse, they would not be the only pretended imitations of natural objects, that ought to be condemned. That islands are often beautiful in natural scenery, and in a high degree productive of variety and intricacy, cannot be doubted; and if it be true, that those parts of seas and large lakes where there are most islands (such as the entrance of Lake Superior* or the Archipelago) are most admired for their beauty—and if the manner in which those islands

* As the islands in Lake Superior are not as yet so celebrated as those in the Archipelago, I will quote a passage concerning them, from Morse's American Geography, which, at the same time that it presents a beautiful picture, shews, likewise, how generally those circumstances, on which I have dwelt, are admired. "The entrance into this lake from the Straits of St. Mary, affords one of the most pleasing prospects in the world. On the left may be seen many beautiful little islands, that extend a considerable way before you; and on the right, an agreeable succession of small points of land that project a little way into the water, and contribute, with the islands, to render this delightful basin calm, and secure from those tempestuous winds, by which the adjoining lake is frequently troubled." Morse's American Geography, p. 127.

produce that beauty, be by dividing, concealing, and diversifying, what is too open and uniform,—the same cause must produce the same effect in all water, however the scale may be diminished; the same in a pool, or a gravel pit, as in an ocean.

Islands, though very common in many rivers, yet seem, (if I may be allowed to say so,) more perfectly suited to the character of lakes; and as far as there is any truth in this idea, it is in favour of making the latter our models for artificial pieces of water. In all of them, the most difficult parts are the two extremities, and particularly that where the dam is made; which, from being a mere ridge between two levels, is less capable of being varied, to any degree, by bays and projections, or by difference of height. The head, therefore, must, in general, be the most formal and uninteresting part, and that to which a break, or a disguise of some kind, is most necessary;

necessary; but as it is likewise the place where the water is commonly the deepest, neither a projection from the land, nor an island, can easily be made thereabouts. There are generally, however, some shallow parts at a sufficient distance from one of the sides, and not at too great distance from the head, where one, or more islands might easily be formed, so as to conceal no inconsiderable portion of the line of the head from many points. In such places, and for such purposes, islands are peculiarly proper: a large projection from the side of the real bank, might too much break the general line; but by this method, that line would be preserved, and the proposed effect be equally produced.

If islands answered no other purpose than that of breaking and concealing, they would be of great use; but when properly formed and planted, they will prove highly ornamental in themselves, and give new

and varied effects to those objects which they partially hide. A circumstance which I have not yet mentioned, very much contributes to the variety which islands are capable of receiving themselves, and of communicating to other objects: as they are disjoined from the shore, it is not necessary that they should strictly correspond with it, either in height or shape; for there are frequent instances in nature, where islands rise high and abruptly from the water, though the shore be low and sloping; and this liberty of giving height to islands may be made use of with particular propriety and effect towards the head. The head of any water (from the reasons I have mentioned) usually presents a flat, thin line, which is but little disguised or varied by the usual style of planting. An island therefore (or islands, as the case may require,) in such a situation as I have proposed, with banks higher than those of the head, abrupt

in

in parts, with trees projecting sideways over the water, if happily executed, would, by boldly advancing itself to the eye, by throwing back the line of the head, by shewing only part of it at a greater apparent distance, form a termination of a perfectly new character; and so disguise the real one, that no one could tell, when viewing it from the many points whence such an island would have its effect, which was the head, or where the water was likely to end.

In forming and planting these islands, I should proceed much in the same manner as in forming the outline of the other banks. I should stake out the general shape (neither a round, an oval, nor any regular figure) and then direct the labourers to heap up the earth, (though not equally in every part) as high as I meant it should be, without levelling, or shaping it; making allowance for its sinking, and reserving always the best mould for the top.

In

In the course of heaping up the earth without sloping it, a great deal would fall beyond the stakes, and would unavoidably give something of that irregularity, and play of outline, which we observe in natural islands: the new earth would likewise settle, and fall down in different degrees, and in various places; from all which accidents, indications how to give greater variety might be taken. If it be allowed that a mixture of the lower growths is as generally useful as I have supposed, it must be particularly so in islands, where partial concealment is so principal an object; and as you can never give such a natural appearance of underwood, and of intricacy,—can never so humour the ground, so mark its varieties, (especially on a small scale) by planting as by sowing,—it is most adviseable to plant only what is more immediately necessary, and to sow seeds and berries of the lower growths, quite from the

lowest

lowest growths of all; and to encourage fern, and whatever may give richness, and naturalness. In any part where I wished the boughs to project considerably over the water, I should raise the bank higher than the rest, and many times give it the appearance of abruptness; yet by means of stones and roots, endeavour both to render it picturesque in its actual state, and to prevent any change from its being broken down. On this high point, I should plant one, or more of such trees as had already an inclination to lean forward, from having been forced in that direction by trees behind them; and some of that kind are generally to be met with, even in nurseries and plantations. By this method, the bank, and the trees of that part of the island, would have a bold effect; and in places where the water began to deepen so much, that it would be difficult to extend the island itself

any

any farther, its apparent breadth, and consequently the concealment occasioned by it, would in no slight degree be extended.

The best trees for such a situation, are those which are disposed to extend their lateral shoots, and are not subject to lose them by decay, and which likewise will bear the drip of other trees; such, for instance, as the beech, hornbeam, witch elm, &c. or should the insular situation, notwithstanding the height of the bank, be found too moist for such trees, the improver will naturally choose from the various aquatics, what will best suit his purpose. Among them, the alder, however common, holds a distinguished place, on account of the depth and freshness of its green, and its resemblance, when old, to the noblest of forest trees---the oak.* In a very different

* The resemblance, when both are in full leaf, is so strong, that

ferent style, the plane is a tree of the most generally acknowledged beauty, and it may be observed, that the boughs, both of that and of the witch elm, form themselves into canopies, with deep and distinct coves beneath them, in a greater degree than those of almost any other deciduous trees; a form of bough peculiarly beautiful when hanging over water. As the aim of the planter would be to make the whole of these trees push forward in a lateral direction, it might often be right to plant some other trees behind them of a more aspiring kind, such as the

that I have seen many persons, who were very conversant with the foliage and general appearance of trees, totally unable to distinguish them from each other; and from having some old alders intermixed with oaks, I have had frequent opportunities of making the experiment. This circumstance, added to their intrinsic merit, renders them extremely useful, where the improver wishes to produce or continue the character of an oak plantation, where the ground is so moist that oaks will not flourish.

poplar;

poplar; and by means of such a mixture, together with some of the lower growths, very beautiful groups may be formed, without any appearance of affected contrast.

It may not be useless to remark on this occasion, that the plane, and all trees, the colour of which is light and brilliant, and their foliage of a marked character, should be used with caution: and the same thing may in a great degree be said of firs. The one will produce light spots, the other dark ones, unless properly blended with other shades of green, and balanced by them. The fir tribe in general, has not a natural look upon islands on a small scale; but should a mixture of them happen to prevail on the other banks of the water, the cedar of Libanus would remarkably suit the situation I have just mentioned: and that, and the pine-aster, in place of the poplar, rising behind it from amidst laurels, arbutus, &c.

would

would form, altogether, a combination of the richest kind.

All the plants I have hitherto mentioned, are such as take root on dry land, or at least above the surface of the water; but there are others which grow either in the water itself, or in ground extremely saturated with moisture, and therefore must, of course, be suited to the character of islands. These are the various sorts of flags, the bull-rush, the water-dock, &c. to which may be added, those plants which float upon the surface of the water, such as the water-lily. From the peculiarity of their situation and of their forms, and from the richness of their masses, they very much contribute to the effect of water, and great use may be made of them by a judicious improver; particularly where the shore (whether of an island, or any other part) is low. I have observed a very happy effect from them in such low situations towards

wards the extremity of a pool,—that of preventing any guess or suspicion where the water was to end, although the end was very near. This is an effect which can only be produced by islands, or by such plants as root in the water; for where trees or bushes grow on low ground, however completely they may conceal that ground by hanging over the water, yet we know that the land must be there, and that the water must end; but flags or bull-rushes, being disposed in tufts and groups behind each other, do not destroy the idea of its continuation.

A large uniform extent of water, which presents itself to the eye without any intricacy in its accompaniments, requires to be broken and diversified like a similar extent of lawn; though by no means in the same degree: for the delight which we receive from the element itself,

itself, compensates a great deal of monotony. Islands, when varied in their shape and accompaniments, have the same effect as forest thickets; circular islands, that of clumps: and the same system which gave rise to round distinct clumps, of course produced islands equally round and unconnected. As the prevailing idea has been to shew a great uninterrupted extent, whether of grafts or of water, islands on that account have been but little in fashion: I have seldom, indeed, seen more than one in any piece of made water, and that, apparently, made rather for the sake of water-fowl, than for ornament. When one of these circular islands (as it often happens) is too near the shore, the canal which separates them, is mean, and the island from most points appears like a projection from the shore itself; and when, on the other hand, it is nearly in the center, (a position of which I have seen some

very ridiculous instances,) it has much the same unnatural, unmeaning look, as the eye which painters have placed in the middle of the Cyclops' forehead; and that is one of the few points on which the judgment of painters seems to me to be nearly on a level with that of gardeners: they have an excuse, however, which I believe the latter could never allege—that of having been misled by the poets.*

As

* All that part of the fable which relates to the form and position of the Cyclops' eye, is by many supposed to have been invented since the time of Homer: it is certain that he is perfectly silent with respect to them both. Some of his most diligent interpreters, have also thought that he never intended to represent Polyphemus as having been originally of a different formation from other men, but merely as having lost an eye by some accident; and at Catanea, in Sicily, there is a sculpture in relief, which does represent him according to this idea. I must own, that notwithstanding these authorities, I am still inclined to think, that Homer did mean to represent the Cyclops in general, as a one-eyed race by nature, whatever may have been his notion of the form and position of that one eye. There is a passage in Strabo which clearly proves that he was of that opinion: speaking of Homer's mixing truth with falsehood, he says, that he probably borrowed τες μονομάτες κυκλωπας, from the history of the Arimaspians. I lately, also, heard an observation

which

As the greatest part of the supposed improvements in modern gardening, particularly

which strongly influenced my opinion. At the time I was writing this note, I mentioned the subject of it in company with some friends of mine, very much versed in all classical learning. One of them, whose words in public and private have such weight, that the slightest of them are recollect'd, said, he was persuaded that Polyphemus never had more than one eye; for if he had ever had two, Homer would not have omitted telling us how he had lost one of them. This remark, though slightly thrown out, struck me as containing great justness of observation, and great knowledge of Homer's character.

But though Homer is silent as to the form and position of the eye, both these circumstances, as likewise the etymology of the name, *Cyclops*, are mentioned with remarkable exactness in the Theogony; a poem ascribed to Hesiod, but which, I believe, is generally thought to be posterior both to him, or Homer.

Μονός δ' οφθαλμός μεσσώ επεκείνο μετωπῷ
Κυκλωπες δ' ονομ' ησάν επανυμον, ἐνεκ αρχ σφεων
Κυκλόερης οφθαλμός ἐεις επεκείνο μετωπῷ.

Euripides, who has written a whole play on the subject of the Cyclops, says nothing of the form of the eye, and very slightly alludes to its position; with regard to the latter, Ovid has in two passages followed Hesiod very exactly.

Whatever may be thought of the merit of this invention in poetry, it has certainly furnished a very bad monster in painting; for the artists who have represented a Cyclops, have placed the eye, not merely in the middle of the face (which possibly *μετωπον*, as well as *frons*, might, with a little licence, be supposed to signify,) but in the exact middle of the forehead,

larly with respect to water, is founded on the principle of flowing lines and easy curves,

considered separately. Callimachus, and, after him, Virgil, have given a much more picturesque image—

Τοισι δ'υπ οφρυν

Φαει μενογληνα, σακει ιτα τετραθοειω

Δεινον υπογλαυσοντα. Callimach. Hymnus in Diana.

Ingens, quod solum torvà *sub fronte latebat*—Æneid, Book 3.
the exact reverse of an eye in the most open and conspicuous part of the face. Theocritus dwells particularly on the thickness, and the continued length of the eyebrow—

-----Λασια μεν οφρυς επι τωντι μετωπῳ,

Εξ ωτος τεταται τωτι θωτερον ως μια μακρα.

From these descriptions, added to the general character in Homer, a much less unnatural, and, at the same time, a more terrific monster might have been produced, even supposing the popular fable to be in a great measure adopted. The eye might for instance be made central, and round; but be placed, according to the authorities I have just quoted, under the forehead. Such an eye, half concealed by the overhanging eyebrow, and *dreadfully gleaming from beneath it*, would give a portentous character; yet still, being so accompanied, and being placed, if not in the usual situation, at least in the usual line, would not, as I conceive, have that appearance of stupid blindness, which a Polyphemus in painting, (before his adventure with Ulysses) always presents.

That appearance I take to arise, not solely from a position of the eye, so different, and so distant from its usual situation, but alio, because the painters have marked the sockets of the two eyes; probably from finding, that when the whole space between

the

curves, I will venture to examine in what points that principle ought to be modified; and in what cases, for want of such modifications, it may counteract its own purposes. Hogarth (as I have observed in a former

the brow and the cheek was filled up, the face lost its form, and became a shapeless lump: and yet, on the other hand, when the sockets of the eyes are ever so slightly indicated, it is impossible not to look there for the organs of sight; and not finding them there, the idea of blindness is unavoidably impressed. Now, I believe, that if a single eye were placed immediately above the nose, and under the brow, and no indication were made of other sockets, that single eye would, in that case, give the idea of vision. Then the one, continued, shaggy, eyebrow, so strongly and distinctly expressed by Theocritus, which seems to favour the idea of an eye in the centre, would, above all things, give a dark and savage look to the giant cannibal: for the mere junction of the eyebrows, is said to have given *un air sinistre* to Marshal Turenne; a man hardly less famed for the mildness of his nature, than for his skill and valour in war.

Although I have on a former occasion disclaimed any critical knowledge of the Greek language, I must add to this long note, by making an acknowledgment of the same kind. I should be sorry to be suspected of making a parade of erudition, if I really were possessed of any; much more, having no such pretensions. I thought the subject new and curious; I wished to collect, and to communicate, whatever might throw light upon it; and I have on this, as on many other occasions, received great assistance from my ingenious and learned friends.

part) has shewn the reason why they are beautiful; namely, "that they lead the eye 'a kind of wanton chase:'" and Mr. Burke, with his usual happiness, has farther illustrated the same idea.* It seems to me that, according to the spirit of both these writers, beauty, as a distinct character, may be said more generally to arise from soft insensible transitions, than from any other cause; and that this circumstance of insensible transition, (which cannot be expressed by any one word) is the most comprehensive principle of visible beauty in its strictest acceptation: as not being confined to lines or curves of any kind, and as extending, not only to form, but to colour, to light and shadow, and to every combination of them; that is, to all visible nature. Smoothness and flowing lines do most commonly produce insensible transitions; and it is chiefly on that

* *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*, page 216, et passim.

account that they are principles of beauty: but if partial and comparative roughness and abruptness (as is frequently the case in the wooded banks of rivers) should more effectually promote that end, whoever destroys them, and makes the whole smooth and flowing, will destroy the component parts of beauty. For instance, a bank of mowed, or of closely-bitten grass, is clearly much smoother than one, on which there are oaks, thorns, and hollies: such trees and bushes, also, break and interrupt the continued flow of those sweeps, which most nearly approach to what has been called the line of beauty; and certainly any abruptnesses in the ground, however slight, are contrary to the idea of beauty in its confined sense: yet a river, even with broken ground, and with rocks, when they are softened (not concealed) by wood, so that the whole is blended together, will not only be more varied, more suited to

the painter, and to the genuine lover of nature, but will be more strictly beautiful, than the finest turf, and the most artfully formed curves, without similar accompaniments of trees and bushes; for such curves, from their distinctness and their nakedness, present nothing but hard, formal lines. All this to me is a proof, that insensible transitions, and not any particular lines or curves, are the means by which beauty in landscape is chiefly effected; for I will venture to assert, that whenever in natural scenery a line of beauty is made by rule, it will most assuredly be unworthy of its name. Still, however, the alliance between flowing lines and insensible transitions, may be shewn from these very curves of artificial water; for if, in addition to the defects of uninterrupted smoothness and bareness, the outline of the bank were to be cut into angles, the sharpness of such an outline would be encreased in proportion.

In

In places where the grounds have been dressed on Mr. Brown's system, particularly in those where water has been introduced, the most inveterate defect seems to me to be this,---that the want of variety and intricacy, as well as of connection, which is apparent at the first glance, and which takes off from the pleasure arising from neatness and verdure, is more disgustingly apparent at every step. On the other hand, one of the greatest charms of a beautiful piece of natural scenery, (such, for instance, as the river I have supposed,) is, that while the general effect and character are strictly beautiful, the detail is full of variety and intricacy: and that is the case in a greater, or a less degree, in all beautiful scenes in nature, even in those of a simple kind. This most essential difference may easily be accounted for. Nature (for we are in the habit of considering

considering her as a real, and reflecting agent) forms a beautiful scene, by combining objects, whatever they may be, in such a manner, as that no sudden, or abrupt transition, either in form or colour, should strike the eye: this I take to be a just definition of beauty in landscape, whether real or painted, especially if we suppose a similar character of light and shadow. Now, Mr. Brown has attempted to produce beauty in scenery, on a totally opposite plan—that of attending to particulars, and neglecting general composition, effect, and character. In the works of nature, many of the particulars are often rough and abrupt; yet each scene, as a whole, impresses an idea of the most pleasing variety, softness, and union. In Mr. Brown's works, the particulars are smooth and flowing; the effect and character of the whole—hard, unvaried and unconnected.

nected. Variety and intricacy* are, in truth, essential qualities of beauty; and whoever, like Mr. Brown, deprives beauty of them, leaves a mere *caput mortuum*: and he, who, also like him, destroys, or neglects connection, leaves out the most essential requisite in every style of scenery. It may likewise be observed, that the circumstances which produce variety and intricacy, (such for instance as the different accompaniments of natural rivers,) serve likewise to produce connection; and with connection, that union and harmony, without which, beauty in landscape cannot exist.

But, it may be said, if this mixture of comparative roughness and abruptness may in some cases (as in the instance just given of a wooded river) conduce more to the

* Not of a sudden and abrupt kind. I have endeavoured in a former part to explain the difference between beautiful and picturesque intricacy.*

* *Essay on the Picturesque*, page 198, 1st Edit.—276, 2d Edit.

beautiful,

beautiful, than smoothness and flowing lines alone, what would then be the distinction between such a river, and a picturesque one? I will begin by repeating what I have before observed, that the two characters are rarely unmixed in nature, and should not be unmixed in art. In this river, I have supposed roughness and abruptness to be so blended with the ingredients of beauty, and rudeness to be so disguised, as to produce altogether those insensible transitions, in which, according to my ideas, consists the justest, and most comprehensive principle of the beautiful in landscape. The whole, then, assumes the soft and mild character of beauty. But should any of these rough, abrupt parts be more strongly marked; should the rocks, and the broken ground, distinctly appear, and their lines be such as a painter would express by firm, decided, forcible touches of his pencil,—then the picturesque

tureisque would begin to prevail: and in proportion as that distinct and marked roughness and abruptness encreased, so far the character of the beautiful would decrease. If, again, this distinctness and rudeness were carried beyond a certain point, the scene would probably become neither beautiful nor picturesque, but merely scattered, naked, deformed, or desolate. These instances may shew, that it would be no less absurd to make picturesque scenes without any mixture of the beautiful, (and the caution at some future period may not be unnecessary,) than to attempt what has so long, and so idly been attempted---to make beautiful scenes, without any mixture of the picturesque.

AN

ESSAY

ON

THE DECORATIONS

NEAR

THE HOUSE.

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ESSAY

ON THE

DECORATIONS NEAR THE HOUSE.

I HAVE contracted a sort of engagement with the public, to give my ideas on the subject mentioned in the title—on the Decorations near the House, in what may properly be called the Garden. I must own it is an engagement I feel great difficulty in fulfilling. The works of painters furnish various examples of *landscapes* in every style—models which have been sanctioned by constant and general approbation:

to these, therefore, the *landscapes* of a place, with some allowances, may be referred. But of the embellishments of *gardens*, the examples given in pictures are comparatively few; and also the influence of fashion (which has little or no effect on the character of landscapes) with respect to them is very powerful.

There is another circumstance which renders the task more difficult: namely, that from this influence of fashion, and the particular influence of Mr. Brown, models of old gardens are, in this country, still scarcer in real nature than in painting; and therefore what good parts there may be in such gardens, whether proceeding from original design, or from the changes produced by time and accident, can no longer be observed: and yet from these specimens of ancient art, however they may be contemned as old-fashioned, many hints might certainly be taken, and blended with such modern

modern improvements as really deserve the name.

What appears to me the great defect of modern gardening in the confined sense, is exactly what has given them their greatest reputation; an affectation of simplicity—of mere nature; a desire of banishing all embellishments of art, where art ought to be employed, and even in some degree displayed. On this account, I have always been sorry that Mr. Mason should have begun his Poem on English Gardening, by an address to Simplicity: not that simplicity is not fully deserving of all our homage, but that it is more than useless to enforce the practice of any one virtue, even where its excess is least dangerous, when the general tendency is towards that excess. Mr. Mason has also given her a jurisdiction, to which, in my opinion, she is by no means intitled; he has made her “*arbitress* of all that’s good

“ and fair.” Simplicity, as a character, may, I think, be opposed, to what is enriched and ornamented: there is, indeed, no one word appropriated to that opposite character; but in painting (and perhaps in other arts) it might, without impropriety, be termed *Richness*. A striking example of their opposition may be found in the works of Rubens, contrasted with those of N. Poussin, after he had neglected colouring, and thought only of the antique. Let any one, who is acquainted with the pictures of those two great artists, reflect how justly the terms of richness and simplicity, will apply to the respective styles of their composition, colouring, and light and shadow; to their manner of disposing and draping their figures, and of producing the general effect of the whole. Had simplicity been the arbitress, Poussin would have been the only model; and what we most admire in the works of Rubens,

and

and of many other masters, could not have existed. The Venetian school owes that richness of colouring, in which it surpasses all others, to the breaking, or *corruption* of colours; which Sir J. Reynolds opposes to the simplicity and severity of the *unbroken* colours of the Roman school: and from that circumstance, and from the splendour of their decorations, he calls the Venetian, the *ornamental* style. Those splendid decorations, the Roman school, justly excluded from the higher style of painting; but from what have we excluded them? from ornamental gardens; from gardens, of which it is the peculiar and characteristic distinction, that they are ornamental, and nothing else: and therefore, in Italian, the name *giardino* is appropriated solely to them, and never (as garden in English, or *jardin* in French) made to signify either kitchen, or pleasure garden. I must say, therefore, with all the respect due

to Mr. Mason, that the making simplicity the arbitress of ornament, is, in my idea, like making mercy the arbitress of justice, or frugality of generosity. It is a very proper and natural sentiment, that mercy should temper the stern qualities of justice, in the same manner that simplicity should correct and temper the profusion and glitter of ornament; but the fages of the law would, I believe, think it an extraordinary position, were any author to assert that mercy is the *arbitress* of what is just and right. On the other hand, it is equally obvious that the firmness of justice, should correct the mildness, however amiable, of mercy; and that in the same manner the splendour of ornament should, in many cases, give spirit and variety, to the uniform, though grand and touching, character of simplicity.

Where architecture, even of the simplest kind, is employed in the dwellings of man,

art must be manifest; and all artificial objects may certainly admit, and in many instances require, the accompaniments of art; for to go at once from art, to simple unadorned nature, is too sudden a transition, and wants that sort of gradation and congruity, which, except in particular cases, is so necessary in all that is to please the eye and the mind. Many years are elapsed since I was in Italy, but the impression which the gardens of some of the villas near Rome made upon me, is by no means effaced; though I could have wished to have renewed it, before I entered upon this subject. I remember the rich and magnificent effects of balustrades, fountains, marble basins, and statues, blocks of ancient ruins, with remains of sculpture, the whole mixed with pines and cypresses. I remember also their effect, both as an accompaniment to the architecture, and as a foreground to the distance.

These old gardens were laid out formally; that is, with symmetry and regularity: for they were to accompany what was regular and symmetrical. They were full of decorations, for they were to accompany what was highly ornamented; and their decorations, in order that they might accord with those of the mansion, partook of sculpture and architecture. Those who admire undisguised symmetry, when allied with the splendour and magnificence of art, will be most pleased with such gardens, when kept up according to their original design. Those, on the other hand, who may wish for an addition of more varied and picturesque circumstances, will find them in many of those old gardens whenever they have been neglected: for the same causes which give a picturesque character to buildings, give it also to architectural gardens;* and the first step towards it is the partial concealment of

* Essay on the Picturesque, p. 46, 1st edit.—p. 62, 2d edit.

symmetry by the breaks and interruptions that arise from an irregular mixture of vegetation; whether of trees and shrubs, or of vines, ivy, and other creeping plants which climb up the vases, steps, and balustrades: many of these circumstances I remember being greatly struck with, at the Villa Negroni in Rome, which have since, to the extreme regret of all the artists, been destroyed. The more broken, weather-stained, and decayed the stone and brickwork of every kind, the more the plants and creepers seem to have fastened and rooted in between their joints, the more picturesque these gardens become: and in that respect they have to the painter's eye an immense advantage over modern gardens; from which all present decoration, and all future picturesqueness, is almost banished. But between the original design, and such an extreme change, there are many intermediate states; as there are likewise

many

many intermediate degrees between the wild and singular irregularity of those plants which seem to start from the old walls, and the elegant forms of vegetation, that no less frequently are produced by accident. All these different states and degrees, may furnish very instructive lessons in this particular part of improvement.

I am aware of a very obvious misrepresentation of what I have just been stating, and by anticipating may perhaps guard against it. It might very possibly be said, that, according to my ideas, and in order to please the painter, a new garden ought to be made, not only in imitation of an old garden, but of an old one in ruin, and with every mark of decay. I will here repeat, what I have observed before on a similar occasion,—that it is not by copying particulars, but by attending to principles, that lessons become instructive. In studying the effects

effects of neglect and accident, either in wild scenes, or in those which have been cultivated and embellished, the landscape painter thinks of his own art only, in which rudeness and negligence are often sources of delight; but the landscape-gardener, who joins (as he always ought to do) the two arts, if not the two professions, must attend to them both: and while in all cases he keeps strongly in his mind the general principles of painting, he must not neglect the principles, or the practice of gardening. He will therefore in the execution, omit, or modify, many of those circumstances, that may be suited to the canvas only.

I have always been of opinion, that the two professions ought to be joined together, and I lately heard an anecdote which confirmed me in that idea. I was told, that when Vanbrugh was consulted about the garden at Blenheim, he said, "you must send for a land-

“landscape-painter;” a very natural answer to come from him, who, as Sir Joshua Reynolds observes, has of all architects most attended to painter-like effects. As he did attend so much to those effects in his buildings, I cannot help regretting that he did not turn his thoughts towards the embellishments of the garden, as far as they might serve to accompany his architecture; which, though above all others, open to criticism, is above most others, striking in its effects. A garden of Vanbrugh’s, even in idea, will probably excite as much ridicule as his real buildings have done, and none ever excited more: but I am convinced that he would have struck out many peculiar and characteristic effects; and that a landscape-gardener, who really deserved that name, would have touched with caution what he had done, and would have availed himself of many parts of such a garden. Now, indeed,

deed, we might only know that such a garden had existed; for it is highly probable that Mr. Brown, unless restrained by the owner, would have so completely demolished the whole, as to

“Leave not a rack behind.”*

But though Vanbrugh did not make what may properly be called a garden at Blenheim, he made a preparation for one, a sort of architectural foreground to his building,

* I should be sorry to be thought guilty of any unfairness to Mr. Brown; but I can only judge of what it is probable he would have done, by what he usually *has* done, and by the general tendency of his system: nor do I think it unfair to suppose, that where there are instances of his having spared old gardens or avenues, some resolute owner of a more enlarged mind

“The little tyrant of his place withheld.”

Had I happened to have seen the noble avenue of oaks I mentioned in a former part,* standing entire, and neither clumped nor defaced, and to have simply heard that Mr. Brown had been employed, I should naturally have given him credit for so judicious a forbearance. But at the time I saw the trees, I was told by the owner himself, that he had resolutely preserved, what Mr. Brown had as peremptorily condemned; proposing (if I remember right) to plant larches in their room.

* *Essay on the Picturesque*, page 196, 1st edit.—274, 2d edit.

which,

which, in consequence of the modern taste in improvement, has been entirely destroyed. As I never saw it while it existed, nor even any representations of it, I do not pretend to say that there may not have been very good reasons against preserving every part of it; but I should greatly doubt, whether a sufficient motive could have been assigned for destroying the whole.

I may perhaps have spoken more feelingly on this subject, from having done myself, what I so condemn in others,—destroyed an old-fashioned garden. It was not indeed in the high style of those I have described, but it had many of the same circumstances, and which had their effect. As I have long since perceived the advantage which I could have made of them, and how much I could have added to that effect; how well I could in parts have mixed the modern style, and have altered and concealed many of the stiff and glaring formalities

malities, I have long regretted its destruction. I destroyed it, not from disliking it; on the contrary, it was a sacrifice I made against my own sensations, to the prevailing opinion. I doomed it and all its embellishments, with which I had formed such an early connection, to sudden and total destruction; probably much upon the same idea, as many a man of careless, unreflecting, unfeeling good-nature, thought it his duty to vote for demolishing towns, provinces, and their inhabitants, in America: like me (but how different the scale and the interest!) they chose to admit it as a principle, that whatever obstructed the prevailing *system*, must be all thrown down—all laid prostrate: no medium, no conciliatory methods tried, but that whatever might follow, destruction must precede.

I remember, that even this garden (so infinitely inferior to those of Italy) had an
air

air of decoration, and of gaiety, arising from that decoration,—*un air paré*—a distinction from mere unimbellished nature, which, whatever the advocates for extreme simplicity may allege, is surely essential to an ornamented garden: all the beauties of undulating ground, of shrubs, and of verdure, are to be found in places where no art has ever been employed, and consequently cannot bestow a distinction which they do not possess: for, as I have before remarked,* they must themselves in some respects be considered as unimbellished nature.

Among other circumstances, I have a strong recollection of a raised terrace, seen sideways from that in front of the house, in the middle of which was a flight of steps with its iron rails, and an arched recess below it, backed by a wood: these steps conducted you from the terrace into a lower com-

* Letter to Mr. Repton, p. 91, 1st edit.—102, 2d edit.

partment, where there was a mixture of fruit-trees, shrubs, and statues, disposed, indeed, with some formality, yet which formed a dressed foreground to the woods; and with a little alteration would have richly and happily blended with the general landscape.

It has been justly observed, that the love of seclusion and safety is not less natural to man, than that of liberty; and our ancestors have left strong proofs of the truth of that observation. In many old places, there are almost as many walled compartments without, as apartments within doors; and though there is no defending the beauty of brick walls, yet still that appearance of seclusion and safety, when it can be so contrived as not to interfere with general beauty, is a point well worth obtaining; and no man is more ready than myself to allow, that the comfortable, is a principle which should never be neglected. On that

account all walled gardens and compartments near a house; all warm, sheltered, sunny walks under walls planted with fruit-trees, are greatly to be wished for: and should be preserved, if possible, when once established. I, therefore, regret extremely, not only the compartment I just mentioned, but another garden immediately beyond it: and I cannot forget the sort of curiosity and surprize that was excited after a short absence, even in me, to whom it was familiar, by the simple and common circumstance of a door that led from the first compartment to the second, and the pleasure I always experienced on entering that inner, and more secluded garden.* There was nothing, however, in

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* The effect of coming upon objects suddenly, and without preparation, is so well known, that I should hardly have mentioned it, were it not that the general system of opening and clearing has made it much less common, and less natural when attempted. Where a thick plantation is made to blind you till the master thinks you ought to see, there is a lurking suspicion in the mind, of an effect to come; very fatal to the intended impression

the garden itself to excite any extraordinary sensations; the middle part was merely planted with the lesser fruits, and dwarf trees, but on the opening of the door, the lofty trees of a fine grove appeared immediately over the opposite wall; the trees are still there, they are more distinctly and openly seen, but the striking impression is gone. On the right was another raised terrace, level with the top of the wall that supported it, and over-hung with shrubs, which from age had

impression.—“Ten lines hence a ghost, and hah! a start.” There is besides a sort of impatience and irritation at being blindfolded for any length of time, and not allowed to make your own compositions, as you may amidst forest glades and thickets. The circumstance of a door, or gateway, in the place where it seems naturally placed for convenience, is the most effectual method of creating surprize. The gateway at the end of Woodstock, through which Blenheim is first discovered, is one of the best examples of it in that particular situation; and I am apt to think that the plainness, and even bareness, in the space before the gateway, and the absence of ornamental plantation, contributes to the surprize and delight, which all must feel at the first view of that magnificent pile of building; whose peculiar fate it has been to excite in almost all beholders the highest admiration, with an equal repugnance to acknowledge it, and a strange desire of reasoning themselves out of their own feelings and impressions.

lost their formality. A flight of steps of a plainer kind, with a mere parapet on the sides, led up to this upper terrace underneath the shrubs and exotics.

All this gave me emotions in my youth, which I long imagined were merely those of early habit; but I am now convinced that was not all: they also arose from a quick succession of varied objects, of varied forms, tints, lights and shadows; they arose from the various degrees of intricacy and suspense that were produced by the no less various degrees and kinds of concealment, all exciting and nourishing curiosity, and all distinct in their character from the surrounding landscapes. I will beg my reader's indulgence for going on to trace a few other circumstances which are now no more. These steps, as I mentioned before, led to an upper terrace, and thence through the little wilderness of exotics, to a summer-house, with a luxuriant Virginia creeper growing

growing over it: this summer-house and the creeper—to my great sorrow at the time, to my regret ever since, to my great surprize at this moment, and probably to that of my reader—I pulled down; for I was told that it interfered so much with the levelling of the ground, with its flowing line and undulation, in short, with the prevailing system, that it could not stand. Beyond this again, as the last boundary of the garden, was a richly worked iron gate at the entrance of a solemn grove; and they both, in no small degree, added to each other's effect. This gate, and the summer-house, and most of the objects I have mentioned, combined to enrich the view from the windows and from the home terrace. What is there now? Grafs, trees, and shrubs only. Do I feel the same pleasure, the same interest in this ground? Certainly not. Has it now a richer and more painter-like effect as a foreground? I

think not by any means; for there were formerly many detached pieces of scenery which had an air of comfort and seclusion within themselves, and at the same time formed a rich foreground to the near and more distant woods, and to the remote distance.*

All this was sacrificed to undulation of ground only, for shrubs and verdure were not wanting before. That undulation might have been so mixed in parts with those decorations and abruptnesses, that they would have mutually added to each other's charms: but I now can only lament what it is next to impossible to restore; and can only reflect, how much more difficult it is to add any of the old decorations to modern improvements, than to soften the old style by blend-

* The remark of a French writer may very justly be applied to some of these old Gardens—" L'agreable y etait souvent " sacrifi  a l'utile, et en general l'agreable y gagna."

ing with it a proper portion of the new. My object (as far as I had any determinate object besides that of being in the fashion,) was, I imagine, to restore the ground to what might be supposed to have been its original state; I probably have in some degree succeeded, and, after much difficulty, expence, and dirt, I have made it look like many other parts of my grounds (and of all beautiful grounds) with but little to mark the difference between what is close to the house, and what is at a distance from it;—between the habitation of man, and that of sheep.*

* The only difference between a garden, and a fine sheep-walk, where oaks, beeches, thorns, hollies, junipers, yews, &c. grew naturally, would be the changing those trees for exotics, such as planes, acacias, tulip trees, pines, arbutus's, red cedars, and the having the ground mowed instead of fed, and the clumps dug. Now if pines, arbutus's, laurustinus's, &c. were mixed, as at Mount Edgcumbe, in the more distant parts (and there seems to be no reason against familiarizing our eyes to a mixture of the most beautiful exotics where the climate will suit them) the distinction which would remain, and which would be almost entirely reduced to mowing and digging, would not be much in favour of gardens.

If I have detained the reader so long in relating what personally concerns myself, I did it, because there is nothing so useful to others, however humiliating to ourselves, as the frank confession of our errors, and of their causes. No man can equally with the person who committed them, impress upon others the extent of the mischief done, and the regret that follows it—can compare the former, with the present state, and what might have been, with what has been done. I cannot flatter myself that my example will be followed by many statesmen: but were the ministers who undertook the management of rash, impolitic wars to be seized with a fit of repentance, and, for the sake of making some reparation, to write their confessions; were they to give a frank detail of their errors (if they deserve no worse a name,) and of the various times when their mind possibly recoiled at what they were executing; and how their own ambition,

ambition, and the blind, unrelenting power of system goaded them on, though they then felt how easily those countries, whose mutual enmity they kept up, might have coalesced, and added to each other's happiness and prosperity—such a detail of dark and crooked manœuvres—so useful a *testament politique*, would almost atone for the crimes which it recorded. With respect to my confession, it may be said that, having made it, I have little right to censure Mr. Brown if he has committed the same errors. I will not plead, (what might well be alleged,) youth and inexperience; the true plea, the true distinction is, that he was a professor, that he acted in a public capacity, and that, therefore, every act of his is open to public criticism: nor will I so far undervalue what I have done, for the sake of shewing in a stronger light what I ought not to have *undone*, as not to allow that many beauties have arisen from the change. It is the *total* change,

change, it is the *total* destruction I regret, even of a garden so inferior to those that I remember in Italy, though with many of the same kind of decorations.

I have hitherto spoken of these old gardens merely from my own opinion and feeling; it is right to shew that their excellence may with great probability be grounded on much higher authority, and still more so to point out, (as far as I am capable,) on what principles that excellence is founded: for without some principles, clearly discernible in the thing itself, mere authority, however high, is insufficient. I know very little of the history of the old Italian gardens, and of their dates; but it is probable that some of them (and which may have served as models for later ones) were made during the most flourishing period of painting: and as some of the greatest painters were likewise architects, and were employed by their patrons in making designs for the *houses* of their

their villas, it is not improbable that they might have been consulted about the *gardens*. The most eminent sculptors, also, who of course understood all the principles of design, if not of painting, embellished those gardens with statues, fountains, vases, &c.; and where men, so skilful in their different lines, and with such exalted ideas of art in general, were employed, they would hardly suffer mean and discordant parts to be mixed with their works; nor would an established fashion in gardening sufficiently account, in that age of invention, for such an acquiescence.

Among the earlier painters, Michael Angelo, Raphael, and Giulio Romano, were architects as well as painters. I do not happen to know whether the house at the Villa D'Este was designed by M. Angelo, but (what is much more to my purpose) he is generally supposed to have planted the famous cypresses in the garden of that Villa. Raphael, I believe,

I believe, gave one part of the design for the Villa Madama, and might possibly have been consulted about its accompaniments: for as the little grotesques with birds, insects, flowers, trellises, and all the minute ornaments of the Loggia were designed under his eye, (in part, perhaps, by himself,) and serve to accompany his sublime historical compositions—there is nothing absurd in supposing that he might have given some attention to the decorations of a garden. G. Romano, the most distinguished among the moderns for a highly poetical genius in painting, did not disdain to make drawings for the Duke of Mantua's plate; and therefore could not have thought it a degradation of his art to have designed such a garden, as would best accompany and set off his own architecture. That style of gardening therefore, and those decorations, which men of such eminence possibly may have designed, certainly did not disdain to associate with their own designs,

signs, ought not to be treated with contempt, and be totally banished, to make way for the productions of a Kent, or a Brown.

Having shewn the possibility at least of such high authorities for the excellence of the old Italian gardens, I will now endeavour to point out what I conceive to be the principles on which that excellence is founded; as well as the cause of the great and sudden popularity and celebrity, of what I have ventured so boldly to censure.

All persons, whether they have reflected upon the subject or not, are universally pleased with smoothness and flowing lines; for they are in themselves highly pleasing. But there are few people, also, who are not more struck with sudden projections, and abruptnesses; more struck, for instance, with rocks, precipices, and cataracts, than with meadows, swelling hills and woods, and

gentle

gentle rivers; for in all such rugged abrupt forms, though they may be only picturesque, there is still a tendency towards the sublime; that is, towards the most powerful emotion of the human mind.* The great point, not merely in improvements, but in all things that are designed to affect the imagination, is to mix, according to circumstances, what is striking, with what is simply pleasing. This seems the principle in architecture. Porticos, cornices, &c. are sudden projections; but then they differ from what is merely picturesque in their symmetry and regularity; + and with respect to ornaments, those of the Corinthian capitals, as well as all friezes and raised work of every kind, though they are sharp and broken, yet are *regularly* so, and many of them consist of the most beautiful curves and flowing

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 87, 1st edit.—106, 2d edit.

+ —————— page 50, 1st edit.—64, 2d edit.

lines. The same principle seems to have been studied in many of the old Italian gardens. Terraces, flights of steps, parapets, &c. are abrupt; but they are regular, and symmetrical: their abruptness produces bold and striking effects of light and shadow; less bold and varied indeed than those which arise from irregular abruptness—from rocks and broken ground, but infinitely more so than those which proceed from smoothness and flowing lines. These strong effects are peculiarly useful in the foreground, both because there the eye requires a more marked and decided character, and, likewise, because they throw off the softer lines, tints, and shadows of the distance. There is also a wide difference between an avowed and characteristic formality, and a formality not less real, but which assumes the airs of ease and playfulness—between that which is disguised by the effect of high drefs,

drefs, and ornament,* and that whose undisguised baldness has no air of decoration to conceal, or ennable its character. I will endeavour to explain this by an example:

A broad dry walk near the house is indispensable to the comfort of every gentleman's habitation: In the old style such walks were very commonly paved; in the modern, they are generally gravelled. The character and effect of walks like that of rivers, (though not in the same degree) depend very much on their immediate boundaries; that of a gravel walk is of pared ground, than which nothing can be more meagre or formal, or have a poorer effect in a foreground; and

* There is an anecdote of Lord Stair, when Ambassador at the Court of France, so characteristic of the effect of high and dignified formality in dress and appearance, that though it may be familiar to many of my readers, I cannot forbear mentioning it. Lord Stair was determined, upon system, to treat Louis XIV. with some degree of arrogance, and endeavour to bully him. Upon trial, however, he could not go through with it; and, afterwards, in giving an account of his intention and his failure, he said, "I'avoué que la vieille machine mà imposé."

however

however the line may be broken and disguised by low shrubs partially concealing its edge, it still will be meagre; and if the grass be suffered to grow over those edges more strongly than in the other mowed parts, it will look slovenly, but neither rich, nor picturesque. But the paved terrace, in its least ornamented state, is bounded by a parapet; and the simple circumstance of hewn stone and a coping, without any farther addition, has a finished, and determined form, together with a certain massiveness, which is wanting to the other; on which account, and from the opposition of its colour to the hue of vegetation, such mere walls are sometimes introduced as parts of the foreground by the greatest painters. When the walk before the door is of gravel, and that gravel is succeeded by the mowed grass of the pleasure ground, and that again by the grass of the lawn, nothing can be more

insipid: if broken by trees and shrubs only, however judiciously they may be disposed, still the whole makes a comparatively flat and unvaried foreground, whether it be looked at from, or towards the house. But when architectural ornaments are introduced in the garden immediately about the house—however unnatural raised terraces, fountains, flights of steps, parapets, with statues, vases, balustrades, &c. may be called—however our ancestors may have been laughed at (and I was much diverted, though not at all convinced by the ridicule) for “walking up “ and down stairs in the open air,”*—the effect of all those objects is very striking; and they are not more unnatural (that is artificial) than the houses which they are intended to accompany. Nor is their effect, taken alone, to be considered, for it extends to other objects; whatever trees are mixed

* Mr. Walpole on Modern Gardening.

with them, whether pines and cypresses, or the many beautiful varieties with which our gardens abound, the value they give to the tints of vegetation and receive from them again, is quite of another kind from that which trees of different sorts give to each other; and this is a consideration of no small moment. The contrast that arises from the tint of stone, either worked, or in its natural state (and the same may be said of many tints of broken ground) is with reason highly esteemed by the painters; it is a contrast which has the great advantage of detaching objects from each other by a marked difference of form, tint, and character, but without the smallest injury to general harmony; whereas strong contrasts in the colours of foliage, of flowers, and of blossoms, destroy harmony, without occasioning either the same degree, or kind of distinction.

I have already mentioned the defects of the common gravel walk in the immediate foreground, compared with the old terrace walk, considering them both in their simplest state: the terrace with a mere parapet; the gravel walk with a pared edge. And here I must mention another essential defect in the gravel walk, namely, that its boundary is not only meagre and formal, but incapable of receiving ornament, or being varied with any effect. The parapet, on the contrary, is capable of admitting a thousand ornaments and variations in its form; and, what is very material, of those which arise from a mixture of the loose forms, and fresh tints of vegetation, united with the works of art. Should the solid wall be thought too heavy—a balustrade, without destroying the breadth, gives a play of light and shadow of the most striking kind, which occurs in the works of all the painters: on the top of the coping, urns,

urns, vases, flower-pots, &c. of every shape and size find their place; vines, jasmines, and other beautiful and fragrant climbing plants, might add their loose festoons to the sculptured ones, twining round and between the balusters, clustering on the top, and varying the height of the wall in every style and degree the planter might direct. In the summer,—oranges, myrtles, and “each plant of firm and fragrant leaf” would most happily mix with them all; and if instead of common pots and tubs, vases of more elegant forms were substituted, they, as well as the plants contained in them, would add to the general richness and variety.

I will here add, as a farther illustration both of what has been said in this, and in a former part,* that a bank in its broken and pictu-

* *Essay on the Picturesque*, p. 24, 1st edit.—p. 34, 2d edit.

refuse state, has the same advantage in giving effect to whatever plants are placed upon it, as the ornamented parapet, and many other ornamented parts of the old gardens ; and upon the same principle. The only difference in this particular case is, that in the one, every thing is regular ; in the other irregular. This illustration may also throw some additional light on what I have said on the subject of ornaiment in general.* A smooth bank uniformly and regularly sloped, is in ground, what a mere wall is in building ; neat and finished, but totally without variety. On the other hand, the overhanging coping,—the cornice or moulding,—all projections of every kind, with their correspondent hollows, answer to the projections and coves, which accident always produces in neglected banks. The various inequalities in the sides and summits of such

* *Essay on the Pictureque*, p. 93, 1st edit.—p. 132, 2d edit.

banks (independently of vegetation) arising either from mould deposited there—from large stones or bits of rock whence the mould has been washed away,—from old trunks of trees, and other rude objects,*—correspond, in their general effect of diversifying the outline, with the vases, urns, flower-pots, &c. The stronger divisions of the roots of trees from which the soil has crumbled away, and left them insulated and detached, may be compared to the openings made by balustrades; or if the fibres are smaller and

* A large old knotty trunk of a tree would generally be rooted up in any part meant to be improved, even at a distance from the house, much more if near it; in my idea, however, great advantage might be taken of objects of that kind, even in a pleasure ground. Such a knotty trunk adorned, and half concealed by honeysuckles, jasmines, and roses, reverses the image of Iole dressed in the lion's skin: it is the club of Hercules adorned by her with wreaths of flowers. Iole herself is the best example of the union of the beautiful with the picturesque; as likewise of the true cause of the sublime, and of its distinction from the last-mentioned character. The spoils of the most terrible of animals, the warlike accoutrements of the most renowned of heroes, being divested of *terror*, only serve to heighten the effect of beauty.

more intricate, to the open work and foliage of gates, or palissades in wrought iron. All these, in either case, are on the general principle of ornament, as being in various degrees and styles, raised, or detached from the surface: some broad, and massy; some minute, light, and intricate: but in the one case, from being regular and symmetrical, they are considered as ornaments; in the other, from being irregular, and not designed by art, they are very commonly destroyed, or concealed, as deformities.

I have already described the effect of mixing the fresh tints and loose forms of vegetation, with vases, balustrades, &c. as also, in a former part of my Essay, their effect when mixed with trunks and roots of trees, and when hanging over the coves or the projections of a picturesque bank.* I will now add, that in such a bank every

* *Essay on the Picturesque*, p. 25, 1st edit.—p. 36, 2d edit.

break, every cove, every projection, is an indication,* where some tree, shrub, climbing, or trailing plant, may be placed with immediate effect: whereas in a bank sloped by art, there is no motive of preference, nothing to determine the choice; and therefore in such banks, it is very natural that the plantations should have the same monotony as the ground on which they are planted. This holds in an equal degree in all smooth and levelled ground, and this one cause of the general monotony of modern improvements acts doubly; for in all broken picturesque banks (whatever may be their scale) each variety that is destroyed is

* The use of such *indications* even to men of high invention, and the assistance which they give to that invention, may be learned from the practice and recommendation of no less a man than Leonardo de Vinci, who advises artists to attend to the stains in old walls; and indeed the singular and capricious forms as well as tints which they exhibit, would assist the most fruitful painter's imagination. This is the principle on which that ingenious artist, M. Cozens, practised and recommended the making of compositions from blots.

not

not only a loss in itself, but it is also a loss considered as an indication, how other correspondent beauties and varieties might have been produced.

To give effect and variety of character to foregrounds (in which light all the garden near the house may be considered) the forms, tints, and masses of stone, or of wood-work, must often be opposed to those of vegetation—what is artificial (however rude) to what is natural; and this, I believe, is the general principle that ought to be attended to from the palace to the cottage. A cottage, with its garden pales, and perhaps some shrub, or evergreen, a bay or a lilac, appearing through, and fruit-trees hanging over them,—with its arbour of sweet-briar and honeysuckle, and the bench under it, accompanying the rustic porch covered with vine or ivy,—is an object which is pleasing to all mankind, and not merely

merely to the painter: he, indeed, feels more strongly the value of their connection, and disposition; but deprive the cottage of these circumstances, place it (as many a modern house is placed,) on mere grafts and unaccompanied,—will the painter *only* regret them? What these rustic embellishments are to the cottage,—terraces, urns, vases, statues, fountains, pines and cypresses are to the palace, or the palace-like mansion: and upon the same principle, gradations of artificial ornament (among which, objects of mere utility, when they in any way embellish a scene, may be included) should prevail in all gardens; from the work of the sculptor, to that of the common carpenter. All mixtures of wood, as well as of stone-work, for the reasons already mentioned, are highly ornamental: the basket work of parterres, and trellises, with the different plants twining round them, have a mixture
of

of natural, and of artificial; and of the peculiar intricacy of each; of firmness and playfulness; of what is fixed, with what is continually changing. I therefore regret that fashion has so much banished them from gardens; but, if I may be allowed to apply, though to a new subject, so very hackneyed a quotation, I will venture to prophecy in Horace's words, and boldly say,

*“ Multa renascentur que jam cecidere, cadentque
“ Quæ nunc sunt in honore.”*

I shall, probably, be accused by Mr. Brown's admirers, of endeavouring to bring about a counter-revolution, and restore the old despotism of terraces and strait lines. I trust I shall hardly be suspected of leaning towards despotism of any kind, and my wish in this instance is to combat the worst species of it, as resembling in a great degree the intolerance of religious despotism; for,

for, like that, improvement allows no salvation out of its own pale. In this case, as in most others, I should rather chuse to follow the example of ancient, than of modern Rome. The old Romans not only tolerated every style of worship, but mixed and incorporated them with their own. The gods of Greece and of Homer, still kept their eminent stations; but there was always some corner where devotions might be paid to Apis or Anubis: and such there might be in any place, whatever its style and character, where a man who had a taste for the Dutch style, might enjoy his tulips, amidst box or yew hedges, labyrinths, &c.

“ And in *trim* gardens take his pleasure.”

I believe, however, that one principal cause of the Italian style having been so completely banished, and the present system established, was the introduction of Dutch gardens. All sculptural and architectural ornaments

ornaments in gardens, though objections might be made to them as being too artificial, not only give impressions of magnificence and expensive decoration, but also recall ideas of the most exquisite works of art, even though the particular specimens should be rude copies, or imitations of them: whereas the vegetable giants, obelisks, &c. of a Dutch garden, when they became principal, carried with them such glaring marks of unimprovable rudeness and absurdity, as made a change unusually popular.* These absurdities,

* With regard to such topiary works, as they are called, there is a very curious passage in a Latin poem of Pontanus de hortis Hesperidum. After giving rules for the preparation and fencing of the ground, he says,

Infode debinc teneram prolem, et fere tramite certo,
Et vinclis obstringe, obeunda ut munera discant
A pueris, sed quisque suo spatioque, locoque.
Inde ubi, et assiduo cultuque operâque magistri
Porrigit et ramos, et frondes explicat arbos,
Ad munus lege quamque suum, et dispone figurâs;
Gratum opus, informemque gregem ad spéciosa vocato.

Hæc

dities, in their ruin, carried away all the Italian ornaments that were mixed with them. The Revolution, therefore, which together with King William brought over his taste in gardening, may be said to have sown the seeds of another revolution hardly less celebrated. But the revolution in taste differed very essentially from that in politics, and the difference between them bears a most exact relation to the character of their immediate authors. That in politics, was the steady, considerate, and connected ar-

Hæc altam in turrim, aut in propugnacula surgat;
 Hæc arcum intendatque et spicula trudat; at illa
 Muniat et vallo fossas, et mænia cingat.
 Illa tubâ armatos ciat, et vocet agmen ad arma;
 Altera tormento lapides jaculetur aheno,
 Discutiat castella, et ruptis agmina muris
 Immittat, fractaque acies (*immane*) ruinâ
 Irrumpat, portis et congregiatur apertis,
 Diruat et captiam irrumpens exercitus urbem.

When we consider that the performers in this grand siege are trees, which in their natural state are called a shapeless crowd, we shall be apt to exclaim *immane!* with the author: a word, which though totally useles in his verse, would be aptly used to express our surprize at such a portentous garden.

rangement

rangement of enlightened minds ; equally free from blind prejudice for antiquity, and rage for novelty,—neither fond of destroying old, nor of creating new systems. The revolution in taste is stamped with the character of all those, which either in religion or politics have been carried into execution by the lower, and less enlightened part of mankind. Knox and Brown differ very little in their manner of proceeding : no remnant of old superstition, or old taste, however rich and venerable, was suffered to remain, and our churches and gardens have been equally stripped of their ornaments.

I have now mentioned what appear to me the chief excellencies of the old Italian gardens, but I am very far from undervaluing, or wishing upon that account in all instances to condemn, modern improvements. The former part of my Essay, as I before observed, relates almost entirely to the grounds, and

and not to what may properly be called the garden; and this distinction I wish the reader to keep in his mind, lest he should be led to imagine that I praise at one time, what I censured at another. In my idea, Mr. Brown has been most successful in what may properly be called the garden, though not in that part of it which is nearest the house. The old improvers went abruptly from the formal garden to the grounds, or park; but the modern pleasure garden with its shrubs and exotics, would form a very just and easy gradation from architectural ornaments, to the natural woods, thickets, and pastures. All highly ornamented walks, such as terraces, &c. of course can only have place near the house: in the more distant parts of the garden, the gravel walk is in like manner, a proper gradation from them to the simple pathway. The garden scene at Blenheim is one of the best speci-

mens of the present style, and I have already endeavoured to point out what are its few defects, and whence its many beauties arise: * had Vanbrugh formed an architectural garden for a certain space immediately before the house, it would not have interfered with this more extended garden, or pleasure ground; on the contrary, it would probably have enhanced the pleasure of it, and, with a slight alteration or disguise, the one style might have been blended with the other, and magnificence of decoration happily united, with the magnificence and beauty of natural scenery. The garden scene at Blenheim may also be cited for the gravel walk in great perfection: the sweeps are large, easy, and well taken; and though in wild and romantic parts such artificial bends destroy the character of the scenery, yet in gardens, where there must be regular bor-

* *Essay on the Picturesque*, p. 261, 1st edit.—p. 358, 2d edit.

ders to the walks, an attention to the different curves is indispensable; and the skill that is shewn in conducting them, though not to be rated too high, is by no means without its merit. That was Mr. Brown's *fort*, and there he was a real improver; for before him, the horror of strait lines made the first improvers on the new system, conceive that they could hardly make too many turns.* His misfortune, (and still more that of his employers,) was, that, knowing his *fort*, he resorted to it upon all occasions, and carried the gravel walk, its sweeps, and its lines, to rivers, to plantations, and universally to all improvements: not contented with making gardens, many parts of which he well understood, he chose to make landscapes, of which he was worse than igno-

* I am told, that he began the reformation of those zig-zag, cork-screw walks; and that he used to say of them; with very just ridicule, that you might put one foot upon zig, and the other upon zag.

rant; for of them he had the falsest conceptions. Against his landscapes, not against his gardens, has almost the whole of my attack been pointed: in the one, every thing he did is to be avoided; in the other, many things are worthy of attention and imitation. In regard to the walks at Blenheim, another circumstance, though minute, adds to their perfection; they are so artfully laid, that the surface becomes a sort of mosaic, and notwithstanding their inherent defects, in my judgment, they add a higher polish to that beautiful garden scene. Whenever any thing can be devised, that has the neatness and dressed appearance of the gravel walk, without its distinct lines and meagre edge, I shall be very glad of the exchange; in the mean time, I must own, I know of no other method of having a dry walk for any length through a pleasure ground, in character with that ground.

With

With respect to fountains and statues, as they are among the most refined of all garden ornaments, so they are most liable to be introduced with impropriety. Their effect, however, (especially that of water in motion, mixed with sculpture,) is of the most brilliant kind; yet though such fountains make the principal ornaments of the old Italian gardens, they are almost entirely banished from our's: statues in some degree still remain. Fountains have been objected to as unnatural—as forcing water into an unnatural direction: I must own, I do not feel the weight of that objection, for natural *jets d'eau*, though rare, do exist, and are among the most surprising exhibitions of nature. Such exhibitions, when imitable, are surely proper objects of imitation, and as art cannot pretend to vie with nature in greatness of style and execution, she must try to compensate her weakness by symmetry,

metry, variety, and richness of design; and fountains, such as are still to be seen in Rome and its environs, may be classed with the most striking specimens of art, in point of richness and brilliancy of effect. But on the subject of fountains, I am inclined to risk what may be reckoned a bold position—that near a house on a large scale, this mode of introducing water in violent motion, so far from being improper, is, of all others, the mode in which it may be done with the most exact propriety. A palace can scarcely ever be built close to a grand, natural cascade, and the imitation of such great falls, unless the general scenery correspond with them, is the height of absurdity. Now, the imitation of water forced upwards in a column by a subterraneous cause, though one of the most marvellous and mysterious effects in nature, yet, in some respects, may, on that very account, be imitated with less improbability

bability than a cascade, for it might take place in any spot whatever—in a naked plain for instance; and it does not necessarily require accompaniments of a particular character, which a cascade does, if meant to appear natural. But, laying aside these considerations, and supposing that there were no example in natural scenery, of water forced upwards into the air, but that human ingenuity having discovered a property in nature capable of producing the most brilliant effects, had applied it to the purposes of human luxury and magnificence—I do not see why man should not be allowed to dispose of one element, as of another; of a fluid, as of a solid. No one blames the architect for cutting stone into forms, of which there are no prototypes in nature: he does not imitate the rude irregular shapes of the rock or quarry whence he takes his materials: he considers that highly-finished symmetrical buildings, decorated with arti-

ficial ornaments, are congenial to polished artificial man; just as huts, dens, and caverns are to the wild savage, whether man or beast. In the same manner an architect-statuary, a Bernini, never could have thought of enquiring what were the precise forms of natural spouts of water; he knew that water forced into the air must, necessarily assume a great variety of beautiful forms, which, added to its own native clearness and brilliancy, would admirably accord with the forms and the colour of his statues, with the decorations of architecture, and with every object round it; he knew that he should preserve, and in some points encrease, all its characteristic beauties; its transparency, its lively motion, its delicious freshness, its enchanting sound; and add to it such magical effects of light and colours,* as can hardly be conceived by those who have not

* Et dans l'air f'enflammant aux feux d'un soleil pur
Pleuvoir en gouttes d'or, d'emerande, et d'azur.

Les Jardins, chant. 1.

seen

seen a *jet d'eau* on a large scale. I am indeed persuaded, that had there been specimens of natural water-spouts near Rome, such as those in Iceland, he would not, in ornamented scenes, have imitated those rude circumstances, whatever they may be, which give them the appearance of being natural. My reason for thinking so is, that there are often cascades, as well as fountains, in the old Italian gardens; and they are manifestly artificial, without any attempt to imitate that style of rudeness and irregularity, which characterizes those which are natural. The stones, indeed, of which they are composed, are rough; but they bear something of the same relation to the rough stones of a natural cascade, and to their disposition, which the *rustic* used by architects, bears to the roughness and irregularity of a natural rock. It will hardly be said that it was for want of proper models in nature, or the power of imitating

imitating them, that such cascades were made, when we recollect the nearness of Tivoli to Rome, and that the age of Bernini, was that of Gaspar, Claude, and Poussin. From all these considerations it appears to me, that in the old gardens, art was meant to be apparent, and to challenge admiration on its own account, not under the disguise of nature ; that richness, effect, and agreement with the surrounding artificial objects, were what the planners and decorators of those gardens aimed at. In that light, fountains with sculpture, are the most proper, as well as the most splendid ornaments of such scenery.

But although the full effects of fountains can only be displayed on a large scale,* yet I believe that in all highly dressed parts, whatever

* The Abbé de Lille, who has very pointedly ridiculed the little fountain, and the statues in a citizen's garden, and all such attempts to be magnificent in miniature, has done justice

whatever be the scale, water may be introduced with more propriety in the style of an upright fountain, than, perhaps, in any other way. It would, for instance, be extremely difficult in a flower-garden, to give to a stream of water the appearance of a natural rill, and yet to make it accord with the artificial arrangement, and highly embellished appearance of such a spot. Now the

to the real magnificence and splendour of those on a large scale, and has celebrated them in verses well suited to the effects he has described. Mr. Mason, on the other hand, has altogether condemned upright fountains with their decorations, and the principle on which they are made. He had certainly a good right to object to them in the English garden, of which he has made Simplicity the *arbiter*; but to condemn them absolutely, and universally, favours more of a national prejudice, than of genuine comprehensive taste. As I feel something of a national pride, I am sorry to give a decided preference to the French poet in point of justness and liberality; but I have often thought that Mr. Mason's passion for the two words, Simplicity and Liberty, has in this, and in other instances, betrayed him into opinions and sentiments of a very contracted kind. Upon this occasion he says,

----- “ Thy poet Albion scorns
 “ E'en for a cold unconscious element
 “ To forge the fetters he would scorn to wear.”

It is difficult to say, whether Simplicity, or Liberty, would have most reason to be disgusted with so puerile a conceit.

upright

upright fountain, seems precisely suited to it, as it is capable of any degree of sculp-tural decoration, which the decorations of the place itself may require; and likewise, as the forms in which water falls in its return to-wards the ground, not only are of the most beautiful kind, but have something of regu-larity and symmetry: two qualities which, more or less, are found in all artificial scenes.

The propriety of introducing any highly artificial decorations, must depend on the judgment of the improver, and his turn of mind; for my own part, I would rather wish that some improprieties should be risked for the sake of effect (where the mischief, if such, could be repaired) than that im-provements should be confined to the present timid monotony. What has struck me in some cases, and in some points of view, as a fault in the general effect of marble statues in gardens where there are no buildings,

buildings, nor architectural ornaments near them, is their whiteness ; for like other white objects they make spots when placed amidst verdure only ; whereas the colour and the substance of stone or stucco, by assimilating with that of marble, takes off a certain crudeness, which such statues are apt to give the idea of, when placed alone among trees and shrubs. This, however, must rather be considered as a caution, than an objection.

In forming a general comparison of the two styles of gardening, it seems to me that what constitutes the chief excellence of the old garden, is richness of decoration and of effect, and an agreement with the same qualities in architecture ; its defect, stiffness, and formality. The excellencies of the modern garden, are verdure, undulation of ground, diversity of plants, and a more varied and natural disposition of them than had hitherto been practised : its defect, when considered

considered as accompanying architecture,—a uniformity of character too nearly approaching to common nature. When considered as improved natural scenery—a want of that playful variety of outline, by which beautiful scenes in nature are eminently distinguished.

The whole of this, in my idea, points out one great source of Mr. Brown's defects. Symmetry is universally liked on its own account: formality, as such, universally disliked; but we often excuse formality for the sake of symmetry: now, Mr. Brown has upon system, and in almost all cases, very studiously destroyed symmetry, while he has in many instances preserved, and even increased formality.* He has also entirely banished

* Vide Essay on the Picturesque, p. 282, 3 and 4.

The same aversion to symmetry shewed itself in other arts as well as in gardening: fugues and imitations in music began to grow out of fashion, about the same time that terraces and avenues were demolished; but the improvements in modern music have a very different character from those in modern gardening, for no one can accuse Haydn or Paisiello of tameness or monotony.

banished strait lines ; not knowing, or not reflecting, that the monotony of strait lines
is

The passion for strict fugues in music, and for exact symmetry in gardens, had been carried to excess ; and when totally undivised and unvaried, it created in both arts a dryness and pedantry of style : but the principle on which that passion is founded should never be totally neglected. Some of the greatest masters of music in later times, among whom Handel claims the highest place, have done what improvers might well have done ; they have not abandoned symmetry, but have mixed it, (particularly in accompaniments,) with what is more wild and irregular. Among many other instances there is part of a chorus of Handel's in the Oratorio of Jeptha, which strongly illustrates all that I have been dwelling upon. It is that which begins

“ No more to Ammon’s God and King,”
a chorus which Mr. Gray, (by no means partial to Handel) used to speak of with wonder. The first part, though admirable, is not to my present purpose ; the second opens with a fugue on the words,

“ Chemosh no more

“ Will we adore,

“ With timbrell’d anthems to Jehovah due.”

The subject for two bars continues on the same note without any change of interval, and the simplicity and uniformity of the notes, may be compared to that of the strait line in visible objects. The ear and the eye, by habit, equally judge of what is intended to have a correspondent part, even before that part is heard or seen ; and feel a sensible pleasure when it is perceived, and a proportionable disappointment when it is wanting. Here then the ear expects another set of voices to take up the strain it is become acquainted with, which accordingly is done ; but then the counter-tenors who opened the fugue, instead of pursuing something

is frequently productive of grandeur; whereas there is a meanness, as well as sameness, in the continuation of regular curves. The terrace walk, therefore, which improvers of his school would probably object to on account of its straitness, had from that very circumstance, a dignity and propriety in its situation, very different from the winding gravel walk; to which it bears the same sort of relation as the avenue to the belt.*

something of the same uniform character as was usual in the more ancient fugues and canons, join with the trebles, and break out into a light and brilliant melody (though still in fugue) on the words "with timbrell'd anthems," while the tenors continue the plain chant of the opening; which again, when they have finished it, the basses take up. The surprize and delight at the fulness of the harmony when all the instruments join with this third part, is enhanced by the recollection of the simple uniform beginning, and also by the general symmetry; that is, by the continued expectation of a correspondent part, the strain of which we know, but are ignorant of the rich, powerful, and commanding effect of the whole union: then the light, and brilliant strain, "with timbrell'd anthems" joined to the varied touches of the instrumental parts, has the same kind of effect on the ear, as the playful and intricate forms of vegetation, mixed with the plain, solid, and distinct masses of stone, have on the eye.

* *Essay on the Picturesque*, p. 269, &c.

It will very naturally be said, that these rich and stately architectural and sculptural decorations, are only proper where the house itself has something of the same splendid appearance. This is true in a great measure ; but though it is only in accompanying grand and magnificent buildings that the Italian garden has its full effect, yet, as there are numberless gradations in the style and character of buildings, from the palace, or the ancient castle, to the plainest and simplest dwelling-house, so, different styles of architectural, or at least of artificial accompaniments, might (though more sparingly) be made use of in those lower degrees, without having our gardens reduced to mere grafts and shrubs. These near decorations in every different style and degree, and their application, ought certainly to be studied by ornamental gardeners, as well as the more distant pleasure ground, and still

more distant landscapes of the place. All I presume to do, is to indicate what seem to me the general principles; the invention of new, and the application of old ornaments, require the talents of an artist: but should the study of the principles of painting become an essential part of the education of an ornamental gardener, I should not despair of seeing them successfully applied to the particular part of it, which has been the subject of this Essay, as well as to those which appear more strictly to belong to the landscape painter.

I am, indeed, well convinced that there is one way by which ornamental gardening, in this confined, as well as in the more enlarged sense of it, would make a real and progressive improvement. It is, that landscape painters (and by no means those of the lowest class, or ability) should give their attention to the peculiar character of such gardens: that they should observe, without

without prejudice on either side, what modern improvers have done; their merits, their defects, and the causes of them: that they should make the same observations on all that has been done in every age and country, compare them with each other, and make a variety of studies on the spot, particularly from the gardens in Italy: in all this, putting fashion out of the question, and judging only by the great leading principles, not the particular practice of their own art. That they should mark the alterations which time and accident had produced, and consider how far such effects might be imitated in new works; and lastly, how all these more ornamented parts might be connected both with the house and the general scenery. By such studies, many new lights would be thrown on the whole subject, many new inventions and combinations worthy of being recorded, would arise; but

the bane of all invention, is exclusive attachment to one manner, and that above all others is the character of Mr. Brown's school of improvement. There is, indeed, a very false idea with respect to originality which may have influenced Mr. Brown—that of rejecting all study and imitation of what others have done, for fear of being suspected of want of invention. Sir Joshua Reynolds has admirably pointed out the fallacy of this notion, and the truth of a seeming paradox, viz. that imitation, (not servile imitation or direct copying) is often a source of originality,* and he has very happily remarked,

that

* As a farther illustration of what Sir Joshua Reynolds has said upon the subject of imitation and originality, I will mention an example taken from an art in which he was not very conversant. If ever there was a truly great and original genius in any art, Handel was that genius in music; and yet, what may seem no slight paradox, there never was a greater plagiary. He seized, without scruple or concealment, whatever suited his purpose. But as those sweets which the bee steals from a thousand flowers, by passing through its little laboratory, are converted into a substance peculiar to itself, and which no other

that by ceasing to study the works of others, an artist is reduced to the poorest of all imitations—that of his own works. This seems precisely the case with Mr. Brown, and might possibly be owing to his ill-directed aim at originality.

Were my arguments in favour of many parts of the old style of gardening ever so convincing, the most I could hope from them at present would be to produce some caution; and to assist in preserving some of the few remains of old magnificence that still exist, by making the owner less ready to listen to a professor, whose interest it is to recommend total demolition.*

The

art can effect,—so, whatever Handel stole, by passing through the powerful laboratory of his mind, and mixing with his ideas, became as much his own as if he had been the inventor. Like the bee, too, by his manner of working, he often gave to what was unnoticed in its original situation, something of high and exquisite flavour. To Handel might well be applied, what Boileau, with more truth than modesty, says of himself—

Et même en imitant toujours original.

* Besides the profit arising from total change, a disciple of Mr. Brown has another motive for recommending it—he hardly

The owners of such places may naturally feel, about raised terraces, &c. nearly as they would about avenues; many who would hardly plant, might still be unwilling to destroy them. What exists, and is mellowed, and consecrated by time, and varied by accident, is very different from the crudeness of new work; it requires only a passive, or at most an obstinate indolence, to leave an old garden standing; it would require a very active determination in a man ever so well convinced of its merit, to form a new garden, or any part of it, after an exploded model. The change from upright terraces to undulating ground, is an obvious improvement;* it

feems

knows where to begin, or what to set about, till every thing is cleared; for those objects which to painters are indications, to him are obstructions.

* Mr. Brown has been celebrated for the bold idea of taking down Richmond terrace. The word *bold*, must always be misplaced in speaking of his works, and here as usual. Had he loosened the ground of a high, but regularly sloped bank of a river, and turned for some time the current against it, in order to take advantage of the breaks and varieties which that current might occasion,—it would have been bold; for then, in opposition

seems only to restore nature to its proper original state before it was disturbed; but it appears a great refinement, which therefore will be admitted with difficulty, to say—that what is unnatural and artificial (particularly with regard to ground) should be done, or left, if done already, in order to produce certain painter-like effects—that these raised terraces, &c. accord with the manifest art of all that belongs to building and architecture—that by contrast they give a greater relish for the natural undulations of the grounds in other parts—that they admit of

sition to common-place ideas, he would have searched after bold picturesque effects; but smoothness, verdure, and a hanging level, were sure to be popular. I do not mean to discuss the merit of this alteration, though somewhat inclined to doubt of it; but merely to question Mr. Brown's title to boldness of conception. His successor, who proposed blowing up the terrace at Powis Castle,* had certainly more merit in point of boldness: I think, however, that upon such occasions some qualifying epithet should be applied, such as *splendide mendax*; and when we consider the flat operation that was to have ensued after the burst of gunpowder, we might say that the successor was more *boldly tame*, than his more illustrious predecessor.

* Letter to Mr. Repton, page 78.

more striking and varied ornaments than mere earth and grass, and form a just gradation from highly embellished to simple nature; just as the polished lawn or grove does afterwards, to the wilder wood-walks and pastures.

All this may seem refinement; and yet it may be observed, that in the higher styles of all the arts—in painting, in poetry, in all dramatic representations, the most striking effects are produced by heightening, and so far by deviating from, common obvious nature; and by adding what is artificial, to what is strictly simple and natural. The good or bad effects of such heightenings, deviations, and additions, depend upon the taste, judgment, and genius with which they are made: what is merely fantastic and extravagant, and done upon no just principle, will very justly be neglected after the fashion is past; but gardening must not pretend to differ from all

all the other fine arts, and reject all artificial ornaments, and pride herself upon simplicity alone, which (as Sir Joshua Reynolds well observes) when it seems to avoid the difficulties of the art, is a very suspicious virtue. I do not mean by this the mere execution, though it is without comparison more difficult in the Italian style: the difficulties in gardening, as in other arts, do not lye in forming the separate parts, in making upright terraces and fountains, or serpentine walks, plantations, and rivers, but in producing a variety of compositions and effects by means of those parts, and in combining them, whatever they may be, or however mixed, into one striking, and well connected whole.

AN

ESSAY

ON

ARCHITECTURE & BUILDINGS,

AS CONNECTED WITH

SCENERY.

AN

ESSAY

ON

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILDINGS,

&c. &c.

ORNAMENTAL Gardening is so connected with Architecture and Buildings of every kind, that I am led to make some remarks on that subject also: at the same time I must acknowledge with respect to Architecture, that I have never made it my study as a separate art, but only as connected with scenery, and therefore shall chiefly confine my remarks to what may naturally

naturally have fallen within the sphere of my own observation.

Architecture in towns, may be said to be principal and independent; in the country, it is in some degree subordinate and dependant on the surrounding objects. This distinction, though not sufficient to form a separate class, ought not to be neglected; had it been attended to, so many square, formal, unpicturesque houses of great expence, might not have incumbered the scenes which they were meant to adorn. I am not surprised, however, that the style of country houses should have been too indiscriminately taken from those of towns: all the fine arts have been brought to their greatest perfection, where large bodies of men have been settled together; for wealth, emulation, and comparison, are necessary to their growth. Of all the arts, architecture has most strikingly embellished the places where it has

flourished:

flourished: in cities, therefore, the greatest number and variety of finished pieces of architecture are to be found; and it is not to be wondered at if those houses, which in cities were with reason admired, should have been the objects of general, and often of indiscriminate imitation.

There are, however, very obvious reasons for making a difference of character in the two sorts of buildings. In a street, or a square, hardly any thing but the front is considered, for little else is seen; and even where the building is more insulated, it is generally more connected with other buildings, than with what may be called landscape. The spectator, also, being confined to a few stations, and those not distant, has his attention entirely fixed on the architecture, and the architect; but in the midst of landscape they are both subordinate, if not to the landscape-painter, at least to the principles of his art.

In a letter written on tragedy to Count Alfieri, by an eminent critic, Sig. Calsabigi, he insists very much on the necessity of uniting the mind of the painter with that of the poet, and that the tragic writer should be *poeta-pittore*: it is no less necessary, and more literally so, that the architect of buildings in the country should be *architetto-pittore*, for indeed he ought not only to have the mind, but the hand of a painter; not only to be acquainted with the principles, but, as far as design goes, with the practice of landscape painting. All that belongs to the embellishment of the scenes round country houses, has of late years been more generally and studiously attended to in this kingdom, than in any other: architecture has also met with great encouragement; but however its professors may have studied the principles of landscape painting, they have had but little encouragement to pursue those studies, or opportunity of connecting them

them practically with those of their own profession. When a house was to be built, Mr. Brown of course decided with respect to its situation—the plantations that were to accompany it—the trees that were to be left or taken down, &c.; the architect therefore had only to consider how his own design would look upon paper, unconnected with any other objects; he was no farther concerned.

Now it seems to me, that if a person merely wants a house of beautiful architecture, with finely proportioned, and well distributed rooms, and with convenient offices, and looks no farther, the assistance of an architect, though always highly useful, is hardly necessary. A number of elevations and plans of such houses, of different forms and sizes, have been published; or he may look at those which have been completed, observe their appearance

and distribution, and suit himself: the estimate, a common builder can make as well as a Palladio.

I am very far from intending by what I have just said, to undervalue a profession I highly respect, or to suppose it unnecessary; on the contrary, I am very anxious to shew, that whoever wishes his buildings to be real decorations to his place, cannot do without an architect. Not indeed a mere builder, but one who has studied landscape as well as architecture—who is no less fond of it than of his own profession—and who feels that each different situation, requires a different disposition of the several parts. In reality, this consideration points out the use, and greatly exalts the character, of an architect: it is an easy matter by means of some slight changes in what has already been done, to avoid absolute plagiarism, and to make out such a design as may look well

upon

upon paper; but to unite with correct design, such a disposition as will accord, not only with the general character of the scenery, but with the particular spot, and the objects immediately round it, and which will present, from a number of points, a variety of well combined parts—requires very different, and very superior abilities.

There are many persons who give up all idea of beauty (except perhaps that of neat stone, or brick work), and who, in order to have as little roof as possible, build up something

So tall, so stiff, some London house you'd swear
Had chang'd St. James's for a purer air.

Something that looks as if it had once been squeezed between two neighbours, and now felt quite naked and solitary without them. I do not mean to argue with the builders of such houses; they are satisfied, and their more difficult neighbours and visitors are

alone to be pitied: there are others, however, who really think very much about the beauty of their house, and not less about that of their place, but who seem to think of them separately, and to be satisfied if both meet with separate approbation. But even in point of vanity, any man I think must feel a wide difference between the reputation of having built a very elegant house, which makes a conspicuous figure in the Vitruvius Britannicus, and the additional praise, so much more rare and appropriate—that the architecture, however beautiful, is but a small part of its merit; that it is not one of those houses which would do nearly as well on one spot as on another, but that it seemed as if some great artist had designed both the building and the landscape, they so peculiarly suit, and embellish each other.

Such union of character and effect can never be expected to prevail, till the application

tion of the principles of painting to whatever in any way concerns the embellishment of our places, becomes general; and perhaps no set of men are so likely to bring about such a reform in the manner of placing and accompanying houses, and thence in every branch of improvement, as the *architetti-pittori*. The education, and habit of study among architects, are so different from those of Mr. Brown and his school, and so much more congenial to painting, that I am persuaded a liberal architect would comply with his own, still more than with an improved public taste, in sacrificing something of the little exclusive vanity of his own particular profession, to the laudable ambition of uniting what never should be separated; and, far from removing trees, which though they might conceal parts of his works, gave much more effect to the whole, would wish, and would direct, such trees to be planted.

It may be said with much truth, that the reformation of public taste in real landscape, more immediately belongs to the higher landscape painters, among whom the higher painters of every kind may generally be included; but, from some circumstances, they are less likely to succeed in a task for which they are so well qualified. In the first place they have few opportunities of giving their opinion, being seldom employed in improved places; certainly not in representing the improved parts: for there is a strong repugnance (which the owners themselves are aware of) in him who has studied Titian, Claude, and Poussin, and the style of art and of nature that they had studied, to copy the clumps, the naked canals, and no less naked buildings of Mr. Brown. Besides, if they are employed at all, it is after all the alterations have been made; whereas the architect frequently begins

gins his works before, or at the same time with the improver. The painter also, might be suspected of sacrificing too much to the particular purposes of his own art; a suspicion which narrow-minded artists in every line will often justify. But the architect, would apparently be making a sacrifice of his own art to that of painting, though in reality he would have the solid glory of combining them both, and of following the example of the greatest painters; some of whom united the two professions, while numbers of them displayed in their pictures the beauty and the grandeur, arising from a union of the two arts.

Much of the naked solitary appearance of houses, is owing to the practice of totally concealing, nay sometimes of burying, all the offices under ground, and that by way of giving consequence to the mansion: but, in my idea, though exceptions may arise

from particular situations and circumstances, yet, in general, nothing contributes so much to give both variety and consequence to the principal building, as the accompaniment, and, as it were, the attendance of the inferior parts in their different gradations. It is thus that Virgil raises the idea of the chief bard,

*Musæum ante omnes, medium nam plurima turba
Hunc habet, atque humeris extantem suspicit altis.*

Of this kind is the grandeur that characterizes many of the ancient castles; which proudly overlook the different outworks, the lower towers, the gateways, and all the appendages to the main building; and this principle, so productive of grand and picturesque effects, has been applied with great success by Vanbrugh to highly ornamented buildings, and to Grecian architecture. The same principle (with those variations and exceptions that will naturally suggest themselves

selves to artists) may be applied to all houses : by studying the general masses, the groups, the accompaniments, and the points they will be seen from, those exterior offices, which so frequently are buried, if not underground, at least behind a close plantation of Scotch firs, may all become useful in the composition ; not only the stables, (which often indeed rival the mansion, and divide the attention,) but the meanest offices may be made to contribute to the character of the whole, and to raise, not degrade, the principal part. The difference of expence between good and bad forms, is comparatively trifling ; the difference in their appearance immense. Then where grandeur and magnificence are less thought of, the most painter-like effects might be produced even by a mixture of the simplest things, when properly placed, and combined with others. In the pictures of many of the great

Italian

Italian masters, mere sheds, with little alteration or disguise, are introduced among buildings of no mean character.

Another cause of this naked appearance, is the change in the style of gardening. While the old style subsisted, the various architectural ornaments, the terraces, summer-houses, and even the walls, as varied by different heights and breaks, took off from the insulated look of the house. On that account, however stiff and formal the gardens themselves, the whole composition was much less so than at present—when from that love of extreme simplicity, as well as of smoothness and undulation, the pasture ground frequently comes up to the hall door; so that a palace seems placed in a field,* while

* The appearance of one of these houses, has often brought to my mind that part of the story of Aladdin, where the Genius of the lamp takes up a magnificent palace from the place where it stood, carries it into another region, and sets it down in the midst

while the palace itself, in point of effect, is a mere elevation. This bareness is still more out of character, in the foreground of an ancient castle, or abbey; yet such a foreground is immediately made, when a building of that kind is unfortunately within the circuit of a gentleman's improvements. Fountain Abbey I never saw, but have heard too much of the alterations, which luckily were not quite completed: there is, however, an ancient castle which I have seen, since that boasted improvement took place, of making it stand in the lawn. The lawn has so entirely subdued and degraded the building, that had I not known it was really

midst of a meadow. One might suppose that this Genius had been very busy in England; but though the Genius of the *bare and bald* is not so powerful in his manner of operating, or so amusing in his effects, as that of the lamp, yet in this particular he rivals him; for though he cannot take up a house from the midst of its decorations, and place it in a meadow, he has often made all decorations vanish, and a meadow appear in their place.

an ancient castle, I might have mistaken it for a modern ruin: nor at a distance would the real size have undeceived me; for from the old foss having been filled up, and the ground levelled and smoothed to the very foot of the building, the whole had caught a character of littleness, as well as of bareness, from the flat naked ground about it.

By filling up the fosses of a castle, its character as a castle is greatly destroyed; by removing the trees and brushwood, and levelling and smoothing the rough irregular ground, its effect to the painter, and its character as a ruin, are no less injured. What a system of improvement must that be, which universally destroys character, and creates monotony!*

Painters

* I lately observed the same effect produced by the same cause on natural masses of stone, in a walk near Matlock. The walk led towards the principal feature—a rock which I had been greatly struck with from below, and was eager to get a nearer

Painters frequently represent trees almost in contact with splendid buildings that have all the appearance of being inhabited; for they add still greater variety and beauty to the most beautiful and varied architecture, and by partial concealment they can give an interest almost to any building, however formal and ugly. In the pictures of Claude, the character of which is beauty and cheerfulness, detached architecture, is, as far as I have observed, seldom unaccompanied with trees; continued buildings (as in some of his sea-ports,) more frequently so: for he seems to have considered them in some measure as

nearer view of. On approaching it, I hardly could believe it was the same, but did not immediately conceive the cause of my disappointment: I had allowed for the bad effect, in such a scene, of a gravel walk with regular sweeps and borders; but besides that, the ground had been cleared, levelled, and turfed from the edge of the walk to the foot of the rock, and round it, into all its hollows and recesses. Though an immense mass of stone, it hardly appeared natural; but seemed rather as if it had somehow been brought and erected there at an enormous expence, in a spot, which, as far as the improvements extended, so little suited its character. X

A sketch of Venetian views

the detached houses are frequently half surrounded by trees, where the canals are regularly planted with them, and their boughs (which at Amsterdam are never trimmed up,) come close to the windows. It is clear therefore that the industrious Dutchman, who employs every foot of the territory which with so much labour and expence has been rescued from the sea, is no less fond of them than the indolent Turk, who inhabits a country where property is not endeared, and its value enhanced by security.

Notwithstanding this instance from a foggy climate, I imagine the fear of dampness would be one of the principal reasons which the owner, or the improver would allege, for not admitting large trees in the foreground of a real habitation, though the painter may place them near an imaginary building: but the number of trees, which an inhabitant of Holland, without fear of inconvenience,

convenience, plants close to his house, is by no means necessary to picturesque composition: a very few, even a single tree, may make such a break, such a division in the general view, as may answer that end; and most certainly will not make any great addition to the dampness.

A second objection which improvers will naturally make, is, that trees must obstruct the view from the windows. In regard to their being obstructions, or considered as such, that will partly depend upon the judgment with which they are placed, and partly upon the owner's turn of mind. Whoever prefers, in all cases, a mere prospect (and in that light every unbroken view may be looked upon) to a prospect, of which the accompaniments had been, or seemed to have been, arranged by a great painter, will think every thing an obstruction, that prevents him seeing all that it is possible to see, in all directions. But he who is convinced that painters, from having

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most studied them, are the best judges of the combinations and effects of visible objects, will only look upon that as an obstruction, which, if taken away, would not merely let in *more* of the view, but admit it in a happier manner in point of composition: and whoever has felt the extreme difference, between seeing distant objects, as in a *panorama*, without any foreground, and viewing them under the boughs, and divided by the stems of trees, with some parts half discovered through the branches and foliage, will be very loth to cut down an old tree which produces such effects, and no less desirous of creating those effects by planting. Still, however, it may be objected, that though such trees may greatly improve the composition from some particular windows, they may injure it from others: this is an objection that I wish to state fairly, and in its full extent. It is certainly very difficult to accompany the best objects

objects in the most favourable manner from one point, without obstructing some of them from others; and it is extremely natural, that a person who is used to admire a favourite wood, a distant hill, or a reach of a river from every window, should not without difficulty prevail on himself, to hide any part of them from any one of those windows, though for the sake of giving them tenfold effect from other points. I will here suppose (what is very rarely, if ever, the case) each circumstance in the more distant view to be so perfect, that there was nothing which the owner would wish to conceal; and that the trees he might plant, would be solely for the purpose of heightening beauties, not of masking defects. Still without some objects in the fore-ground, this view, however charming, would be nearly the same from each window; whereas by means of trees, each window would present a different

picture, and the charm of variety, though some of the variations should be unfavourable, ought to be taken into the account. It is more probable, however, that even those windows whence the objects would be most concealed (how infinitely stronger the case, and it is not less frequent, where much ought to be concealed) might present certain portions of the more distant view across the branches and foliage, in so picturesque a manner, that a lover of painting would often be more captivated by them, than by a studied composition.

I have endeavoured in all I have stated, to point out some of the advantages that are gained, by breaking with trees a uniform view from a house, and to obviate some of the objections to such a method; and I have done it more fully, because the opposite system has strongly prevailed. I do not mean, however, to assert that

that such breaks are always necessary, or expedient; though, in my own opinion, it can seldom happen that a view will not be improved, from one, or more trees, rising boldly above the horizon. Where fine old trees are *left*, they plead their own excuse; but for many years there is a poverty in the appearance of young single trees, that may well discourage improvers from planting them, though they may clearly foresee the future effect of each plant, and wish for old trees in those positions. That poverty may be remedied, by making dug clumps in most of the places fixed upon for single trees, and by mixing shrubs with them. This produces an immediate mass; the temporary digging and the shelter, promote the growth of the trees intended to produce the effect; by degrees the shrubs may be removed entirely, or some left to group with them, as may best suit the situation; and as they get up, the boughs may be opened and trained,

so as to admit, or exclude, what is beyond them, just as the planter thinks fit.

I now come to another objection, viz. that they conceal too much of the architecture. And here I will allow, however desirous I may be of varying the composition from the house, and of softening too open a display of symmetry, that great respect ought to be paid to such works, as are deservedly ranked among the productions of genius, in an art of high consideration from the remotest antiquity. Whenever the improvement of the view, would injure the beauty or grandeur of such works, or destroy that idea of connection and symmetry, which, though veiled, should still be preserved,—such an improvement would cost too dear. But in every building where the forms and the heights are varied by means of pavillions, colonades, &c. there are places, where trees might be planted with great advantage to the effect of the building, considered as part of

of a picture, without the smallest injury to it as a piece of architecture; and in the placing of which accompaniments, the painter who was conversant in architecture, and the architect who had studied painting, would probably coincide: and this, I think, may more strongly point out the difference I mentioned before, between the style which suits a town only, and that which might suit both town and country. A square, detached house in the country, while it requires trees to make up for the want of variety in its form, affords no indication where to place them with effect; and though they will take off from the monotony, they will not, as in the other case, so mix in with the buildings, as to seem a part of the design of an architect-painter.

The accompaniments of beautiful pieces of architecture, may in some respects be compared to the dress of beautiful women. The addition of what is hardly less foreign

to them, than trees are to architecture, varies and adorns the charms even of those, who, like Phryne, might throw off every concealment, and challenge the critic eyes of all Athens assembled. Men grow weary of uniform perfection; nor will any thing compensate the absence of every obstacle to curiosity, and every hope of novelty. It is not probable, that Phryne was ignorant, or neglectful, of the charms of variety, and of partial concealment; and if the most perfect forms, may be rendered still more attractive by what is foreign to them, how much more those, which have little or no pretensions to beauty! How many buildings have I seen, which, with their trees, attract and please every eye! but deprive one of them of those accompaniments, what a solitary deserted object would remain! I will not go on with the parallel, but I believe the effect would in both cases be very similar.

It may very naturally occur to any reader, and without the desire of cavilling, that if painters sometimes did, and sometimes did not, accompany their buildings with trees; if both they and architects, sometimes did, and sometimes did not, vary the lines, heights, and dispositions of their buildings, the same liberty, according to the author's own principles, ought to be allowed to the improver. Nothing can be more just; and I should be very sorry to be suspected of having combated the despotism of others, in order to establish any arbitrary opinions of my own: but a physician must proportion his remedy to the degree, as well as to the nature of the disease; and bareness, monotony, and want of connection, are in a high degree the diseases of modern improvement. Had the opposite system prevailed (and in the revolutions to which fashion is subject, it may still prevail), had all buildings of every kind

kind been encumbered by trees, or had they (from a rage for the picturesque) been fantastically designed, with an endless diversity of different heights and breaks, with odd projections and separations,—I should equally have taken my arguments from the works of eminent painters, as well as of architects, against such a departure from all grandeur, elegance, and simplicity.

The best preservative against flatness and monotony on the one hand, and whimsical variety on the other, is an attentive study of what constitutes the grand, the beautiful, and the picturesque in buildings, as in all other objects. An artist who is well acquainted with their causes and effects, with the qualities of which they are compounded, and with the tendency of those qualities if carried to excess,* will know when to keep each character separate, when, and in what

* *Essay on the Picturesque*, p. 175, 1st edit.—222, 2d edit.

degree, to mix them, according to the effect he means to produce.

The causes and effects of the sublime and of the beautiful, have been investigated by a great master, whose footsteps I have followed in a road, which his penetrating and comprehensive genius had so nobly opened: I have ventured indeed to explore a new track, and to discriminate the causes and the effects of the picturesque, from those of the two other characters: still, however, I have in some degree proceeded under his auspices; for it is a track I never should have discovered, had not he first cleared and adorned the principal avenues.

With respect to the sublime in buildings, Mr. Burke, without entering into a minute detail, has pointed out its most efficient causes; two of which are succession, and uniformity. These he explains and exemplifies by the appearance of the ancient heathen

then temples, which, he observes, were generally oblong forms, with a range of uniform pillars on every side; and he adds, that from the same causes, may also be derived the grand effects of the aisles, in many of our own Cathedrals. But although succession and uniformity, when united to greatness of dimension, are among the most efficient causes of grandeur in buildings, yet causes of a very opposite nature (though still upon one general principle,) often tend to produce the same effects. These are, the accumulation of unequal, and, at least, apparently irregular forms, and the intricacy of their disposition. The forms, and the disposition of some of the old castles built on eminences, fully illustrate what I have just advanced: the different outworks and massive gateways; towers rising behind towers; the main body perhaps rising higher than them all, and on one side descending in

in one immense solid wall, quite down to the level below,—all impress grand and awful ideas.

As I have in a former part made intricacy a characteristic mark of the picturesque, I may possibly be accused of inconsistency in making it also a cause of grandeur. It might be sufficient to say, that there are other qualities common to the sublime and to the picturesque, such as roughness and abruptness; and that therefore intricacy might be in the same class. I shall not, however, be satisfied with that general defence, but shall endeavour to account in a more satisfactory manner, for this seeming inconsistency. There appear to be various degrees and styles of intricacy. Hogarth, for instance, in speaking of the effect of those waving lines which steal from the eye, and lead it a kind of wanton chace, has termed it the *beauty* of intricacy: that I have endeavoured to distinguish from the more sudden and abrupt

kind

kind which belongs to the picturesque,* and will now point out what I conceive might be called with equal propriety, the sublime of intricacy.

When suspense and uncertainty, are produced by the abrupt intricacy of objects divested of grandeur, they are merely amusing to the mind, and their effect simply picturesque. But where the objects are such as are capable of inspiring awe or terror, there suspense and uncertainty are powerful causes of the sublime; and intricacy may by those means, create no less grand effects, than uniformity and succession. An avenue of large and lofty trees, forming a continued arch, and terminated by the gateway of a massive tower, is a specimen, and no mean one, of the grandeur arising from succession and uniformity. On the other hand, many forest scenes are no

* *Essay on the Picturesque*, p. 198, 1st edit.—276, 2d edit.

less striking examples of the grandeur of intricacy. In the avenue, all is simple and uniform in the highest degree, and the eye is totally fixed to one point, to one focus. In the forest scene, trees of different shapes and sizes, cross each other in numberless directions; while other parts of the wood, are mysteriously seen between their trunks and branches. Instead of one strait walk or road without any variation—uncertain tracks appear, wild and irregular as the trees and thickets through which they pass: instead of one solemn mass of foliage, that hides the sky and its effects—gleams of light, issuing perhaps from stormy and portentous clouds, shoot athwart the glades, and, by discovering part of the recesses, shew how deep the gloom is beyond. The grandest of all landscapes, the San Pietro Martire of Titian, is in part a scene of this kind. The assassination is committed amidst lofty trees, at the

entrance

entrance of a forest; a supernatural light from a glory of angels, is mixed in with the foliage and branches of the trees, and conceals part of their summits; two horsemen in armour, the one turning his head back towards the assassins, the other pushing forward, are seen at some distance just entering the depth of the forest, and forcibly carry the eye and the imagination, towards its dark and intricate recesses. But in this model of the sublime in landscape, we see none of those singularly curved and twisted stems and branches, as in the old trees of Bloemart, of Ruysdal, and others of the Dutch and Flemish schools; or their playful varieties of bushes, scattered thickets, and catching lights; not even the more noble and animated wildness, of Salvator's stems and branches: but the whole character of the picture, seems to be an exact medium between the savage grandeur of that sublime, though

though eccentric genius, and the sedate solemn dignity, which usually characterizes the landscapes of Poussin.

The same kind of difference subsists, between the intricacy of the pinnacles and fret work of Gothic architecture, and that more broad and massive kind, of the towers and gateways of ancient castles. Mr. Burke observes, that the sublime in building should be solid, and even massive; and in my idea, no single cause acts so powerfully, and can so little be dispensed with as massiveness: but as massiveness is so nearly allied to heaviness, it is (in this age especially*) by no means

* It might be thought somewhat strained to suppose, that the most fashionable style of writing in any age, should at all influence the character of other arts: yet something of the same general taste is apt to prevail in them all, during the same period; and a distaste for whatever is opposed to it. Voltaire was, without comparison, the most fashionable writer of this century; and in addition to the charms of the lightest and most seducing style, he did not neglect any occasion of insinuating its excellence. For fear his writings should be thought too

means a popular quality ; for in whatever regards the mind itself, or the works that proceed from it, the reproach of heaviness is of all others, the least patiently endured : it is a reproach, however, that has been made to some of the most striking buildings both ancient and modern. Among the various remains of ancient temples, none, perhaps, have so grand an effect as the old Doric temples in Sicily, and at Pæstum ; though from their general look of massiveness, and from the columns being without bases, none are more opposite, to what are usually considered as light buildings. But may it not be doubted,

light and superficial, compared with others of a more solid and argumentative kind, he turned the keen edge of his wit against any appearance of that quality, which has been so ridiculed in Vanbrugh's architecture: he called the great Dr. Clarke (it must be owned with some humour, however unjustly) "*une vraie machine à raisonnement;*" and, indeed, he summed up the whole matter in one short maxim, which equally characterizes his mind and his style—" *Il n'y q'un mauvais genre; c'est le geure ennuyeux.*"

whether

whether the giving of bases to those columns, and consequently a greater degree of lightness and airiness to the whole, might not proportionably diminish that solid, massive grandeur, which is so striking to every eye. If, again, we consider modern buildings, no mansion of regular, finished, ornamental architecture that I have yet seen, has from such a number of different points, so grand an appearance as Blenheim; and never was any building so loaded with the reproach of heaviness.* How far the heaviness of the ancient temples, or of the modern palace, might be diminished, without diminution of their grandeur, may be a question;

* It would hardly be supposed that the *heaviness* of Blenheim would ever have been mentioned as a compliment to the noble owner; yet I remember hearing an instance of it. The conversation happened to turn upon the immense weight that an egg would support, if pressed exactly in a perpendicular direction:—no weight, they said, would break it. A person who was sitting at some distance from the Duke of Marlborough, called out to him, “ My Lord Duke! if they were to put Blenheim upon it, “ egod I believe it would crush the egg.”

but I believe it is very clear, that after a certain point, as they gained more in lightness, they would become less majestic, and, beyond that again, less beautiful.*

The same principle seems to have guided the highest painters in respect to the human figure: the Prophets and Sybils of M. Angelo, Raphael and Fra. Bartolomeo are all massive: Tibaldi, and after him the Carracci and their disciples, formed their style upon those famous models; and they had a peculiar word (*sagoma*), to express that ful-

* Since I wrote this part, a passage from Plutarch was pointed out to me, as extremely illustrative of the bad effect of a passion for lightness and elegance, by a friend, who is himself of all others the most capable in every way, of illustrating the whole subject—"This fourth temple of Jupiter Capitolinus (the three former having perished by fire) was completed and dedicated by Domitian. The columns were cut out of Pentelic marble, having their thickness most beautifully proportioned to their length; for we saw them at Athens. But being cut over again, and polished at Rome, they did not gain so much in elegance, as they lost in symmetry: they appear too slender, and are void of beauty."

Plutarch in the Life of Poplicola.

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ness and massiveness of form, as opposed to the meagreness of Mantegna, Pietro Perugino, and almost all the earlier painters. Particular exceptions may indeed be produced, as for instance the Moses of Parmeggiano, so highly and so justly admired by the poet Gray; that, like all his figures, is of a more lengthened proportion, and the body thinner, than those of the other masters whom I have mentioned; but the limbs, have the same fulness of form, in a very high degree. It must be remembered, also, that expression of countenance, energy of action, and many other circumstances, will give to the human figure, what cannot be given to a building.

But the effects of art are never so well illustrated, as by similar effects in nature: and, therefore, the best illustration of buildings, is by what has most analogy to them—the forms and characters of rocks; in which it can hardly be doubted, that massiveness is a most efficient cause of grandeur.

Where the summit of such massive rocks runs in a parallel line, and the breaks and projections lower down are slightly marked, both the first impression is less strong, and the eye soon becomes weary; for though a natural wall of such solidity and magnitude must always be a grand object, it is still a wall.

But where certain bold projections are detached from the principal body of rock; where in some places, they rise higher than the general summit, and in others, seem a powerful buttress to the lower part,—the eye is forcibly struck with the grandeur of such detached masses, and occupied with the variety of their form, and light and shadow. Such is the effect and the character of many of the ancient castles.

On the other hand, it no less frequently happens, that the lower parts of rocks are varied in shape, and boldly relieved, while their summit describes one uniform line; the projections

projections then lose their consequence when seen from afar, (especially in a front view,) and the eye is more distinctly occupied with the line of the summit. This is the case with many of those buildings, which are executed in what is called Grecian, or Italian architecture: when viewed at a distance, the porticos and columns are less observed, than the general squareness, and the strait lines of the roof.

But in the approach to those rocks with an unvaried summit, should you come so near them, that in many parts, that summit was concealed and broken by the projecting parts below,—then the whole would become varied, yet the masses be preserved. Such is the effect of Grecian architecture, where the spectator is on a level with the base of the building, and confined with respect to distance; and then the columns and porticos have their full effect—the most no-

ble and beautiful that architecture can display.

Again, those rocks of crumbling, friable stone, that are broken into detached pointed forms, with holes, openings, and intricacies of every kind, may be compared to similar forms, openings, and intricacies in Gothic buildings, of which indeed they probably gave the first idea; highly amusing from their variety and singularity, but much less grand and imposing.

Rocks of slate and shivering stone, which, instead of being disposed in large masses, are parted into thin layers, however lofty they may be, however their summits may be broken and varied, have comparatively a poor effect, from the want of solidity and massiveness. These are like castles and towers built of rubbish and small stones, kept together by the cement only; both of them at a distance, and under the influence of twilight, or of a

misty

misty atmosphere, assume a grandeur, which from the same cause they lose on a nearer approach.

Lastly, there are high uniform banks of red earth, without any hollows or projections; to which unhappily the greater part of the houses in this kingdom have but too close a resemblance.

From the analogy between the general effects of rocks and of buildings, I am led to believe, that though many small divisions (however they may create diversity and intricacy) diminish grandeur, yet that certain marked divisions, by affording the eye a scale of comparison, give a greater consequence to the whole. The same quantity, therefore, of stone, brick, or any other material, if divided into certain large portions, (as, for instance, into round or square towers) will not only be more varied, but appear of greater magnitude, than the same quantity of materials

rials in one square mass; such as is often seen in houses of what is called the Italian style.* I may add, that of the more distant views of houses in the country, those are the most generally pleasing, where trees and masses of wood intervene, and where consequently the base is not seen: now, in such views, the porticos and the breaks below the summit, are often in a great degree concealed, and the line of the roof, being the

* The effect of this principle struck me very much at Wollaton*, a house, which for the richness of its ornaments in the near view, and the grandeur of its masses from every point, yields to few, if any, in the kingdom. But it is still more striking when contrasted with the neighbouring castle (as it is called) of Nottingham. That is, a long, square house, of the Italian style, built in a high commanding situation, overlooking the town. The long unvaried line of the summit, and the dull uniformity of the whole mass, would not have embellished any style of landscape; but such a building, on such high ground, and its outline always distinctly opposed to the sky, gives an impression of ridicule and disgust. The hill and the town are absolutely flattened by it; while the comparatively low situation of Wollaton, is so elevated by the form of the house, that it seems to command the whole country round it.

* Lord Middleton's, within two miles of Nottingham.

part opposed to the sky, becomes principal; in which cases the advantage of towers, and of whatever varies that line, is obvious.

Sir Joshua Reynolds is, I believe, the first who has done justice to the architecture of Vanbrugh, by shewing that it was not a mere fantastic style, without any other object than that of singularity, but that he worked on the principles of painting, and has produced the most painter-like effects.* It is very possible that the ridicule thrown on Vanbrugh's buildings, by some of the wittiest men of the age he lived in, though not the best judges of art, may in no slight degree have prevented his excellencies from being properly attended to; for what has been the subject of ridicule, (and of such exquisite ridicule) will seldom become the object of study, or imitation. It appears to me that at Blenheim, Vanbrugh conceived and ex-

* Sir Joshua Reynolds's Thirteenth Discourse.

ecuted a very bold and difficult design; that of uniting in one building, the beauty and magnificence of Grecian architecture, the picturesqueness of the Gothic, and the massive grandeur of a castle; and that in spite of the many faults with which he is very justly reproached, he has formed, in a style truly his own, a well-combined whole, a mansion worthy of a great prince, and warrior. His first point seems to have been massiveness, as the foundation of grandeur. Then, to prevent that mass from being a lump, he has made various bold projections of various heights, which from different points serve as foregrounds to the main building. And, lastly, having probably been struck with the variety of outline against the sky, in many Gothic and other ancient buildings, he has raised, on the top of that part, where the sloping roof begins in many houses of the Italian style, a number of decorations

corations of various characters. These, if not new in themselves, have at least been applied and combined by him in a new and peculiar manner; and the union of them gives a surprising splendour and magnificence, as well as variety, to the summit of that princely edifice.* There is a point on the opposite side of the lake, whence it is seen in full glory, and with its happiest accompaniments. The house, the lake, and the rich bank of the garden, may be so grouped

* I do not know whether Vanbrugh ever was in Italy, or whether there ever was a print of the house of Nicolò di Rienzo before that by Piranetti, in his Views of Rome: but supposing him to have seen either the house itself, or a print of it, I should not be surprised if it had suggested to him the idea of the open arches on the top of Blenheim. The house of Rienzo (by Piranetti's account) was built out of the ruins of some ancient edifices from which the entablature was probably taken; immediately over that entablature (as at Blenheim) are raised some open arches, which terminate the whole; a mode of finishing the summit, which I have seldom observed in other buildings. These arches, however, are quite simple, like those of an aqueduct; whereas the arches at Blenheim are turned to different points, and, with their piers, cluster together like some of the old chimnies, and thence acquire that richness which Vanbrugh aimed at.

* Tom. 1. Tavola 21.

with some of the trees that stand near the water, and hang over it, and so framed amidst their stems and branches, as to exclude all but the choicest objects; and whoever catches that view towards the close of the evening, when the sun strikes on the golden balls, and pours his beams through the open parts, gilding every rich and brilliant ornament, will think he sees some enchanted palace. But let those decorations be changed for the summit of any of the most celebrated houses built since the time of Vanbrugh, such as Fonthill, or Kedleston—in which (if I may trust to my recollection, and to the designs) the edge of a sloping roof, with scarcely any other break but that of detached chimneys, forms the outline against the sky—and, however the sun might illuminate such a summit, the spectator would no longer think of Alcina or Armida.

I have already disclaimed all knowledge
of

of architecture as a science, and have professed my intention, of treating of it chiefly as connected with scenery: after what I have said of Vanbrugh, it is highly necessary to renew that declaration. Few persons, I believe, have in any art been guilty of more faults, though few, likewise, have produced more striking effects. As an author, and an architect, he boldly set rules at defiance, and in both those characters, completely disregarded all purity of style; yet, notwithstanding those defects, Blenheim, and Castle Howard, the Provoked Wife, and the Relapse, will probably be admired, as long as the English nation or language shall continue to exist.

An architect who is thus notorious for his violation of rules, his neglect of purity and elegance, and his licentious mixture of styles and ornaments, certainly ought not to be held up as a model for imitation: but, on
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the other hand, an artist who, in any art, produces new and striking effects, well deserves to have their causes investigated; for he who has produced such effects (it hardly matters by what means) has attained a great end. The study, therefore, not the imitation of Vanbrugh's architecture, might be extremely serviceable to an artist of genius and discernment. It is true that Sir Joshua Reynolds, when speaking in praise of Vanbrugh, has disclaimed any authority on the subject of architecture as a science; but his authority as a painter, for the general picturesque effect of buildings, is indisputable; and what such a man admired, ought not rashly to be despised, or neglected. He explained, upon the principles of his own art, what were those of the architect of Blenheim; and they deserve to be still farther discussed. I should think it would be an excellent study for an architect, to make drawings

drawings of Blenheim,* endeavouring to preserve the principle of light and shadow, the character of the architectural foreground, the effect of the raised decorations on the roof, and the general grandeur and variety of the whole; but trying at the same time to give more lightness and purity of style to that whole, more elegance and congruity to the parts; observing as he proceeded, how far he found it necessary to sacrifice purity, lightness, elegance, and unity of style, in order to preserve those effects which Vanbrugh has produced. Let him, too, if he likewise understand landscape, substitute any fine house, of the same style of architecture with those I lately mentioned, in the room of Blenheim. Let him do it, where the view first opens, at the entrance from Wood-

* If I mention Blenheim singly, it is, that I have had constant opportunities of examining it, which I, unluckily, have not enjoyed, with respect to the no less magnificent fabric of Castle Howard.

flock; and also in other views, where the portico, and the best parts of such a building would be seen to most advantage. Let him again make the same change, and consider it from other points, whence the projecting parts would be hidden, and only the summit seen; and I believe he would be convinced, that if Blenheim has not the purer graces of the art, it has something, which, if there be no possibility of allying it with those graces, should by no means be sacrificed to them.

When I consider the cause, whence the striking effect of Blenheim in all the more distant views, proceeds, I cannot but reflect with surprise, on the little attention that has been paid to the summits of houses in the country; even of those, of which every other part is expensively decorated. As in many of them the difference of expence was no object, I can only account for it from what I mentioned before—that the architecture

tecture of houses in towns, has been too indiscriminately followed in the designs of mansions in the country. The reason I then suggested, why the forms of the summits are less material in town houses, than in those which are placed in the midst of landscapes, was, that in streets and squares, they are seen from more confined spaces, from fewer points, and from a more uniform level. There are situations, however, where the summits of mere houses in towns, may be very material in the general view; as when a town happens to be placed on the side of a hill, where the ascent is steep, and the ground irregular: for, as in such cases the houses rise above each other, with sudden changes in their level and direction, their tops are more distinctly seen, and from a greater variety of different points. In situations of that kind, were an architect, with a painter's eye, to have the planning of the whole, he would have an

opportunity of producing the richest effects, by combining his art with that of painting; by varying the characters of the buildings, and particularly of their summits, according to the place which they were to occupy.

Amidst all the interesting circumstances at Tivoli, nothing is more striking to a person, who has been used to consider the disposition and grouping of objects, than the manner in which the general outline of the town yields and varies, according to the shape of its foundation; with now and then a counter-acting line, that gives a zest and spirit to the composition. Not a projecting rock or knoll, no “coigne of vantage” but is occupied: the buildings advancing, or retiring from the eye, according to the nature of their situation; while the happy mixture of trees completes the whole. Much of this is probably owing to lucky accident, as well as to judicious design; but what if Mr. Brown, or any
of

of his followers, had been employed to lay out such a town according to their conceptions of scenery! what gunpowder-plots should we have had (as at Powis Castle),* not to procure, but to get rid of the effects of accident, and to reduce the whole to their system of monotony! As I recollect my admiration of the circumstances I have just mentioned, at Tivoli, so I remember my disappointment the first time I approached Bath, notwithstanding the beauty of the stone with which it is built, and of many of the parts on a nearer view. Whoever considers, what are the forms of the summits, how little the buildings are made to yield to the ground, and how few trees are mixed with them, will account for my disappointment, and probably lament the cause of it.

When a town, built nearly on level ground, is viewed at a distance, the summits

* Letter to Mr. Repton, p. 78, 1st edit.—p. 88, 2d edit.

of the houses are of much less consequence; for they then either disappear totally, or are so blended with each other, that their shapes are scarcely distinguished. But observe, how those buildings which are meant to have the principal effect in the general view of a town are varied and adorned; observe what are the objects which then strike our eyes, either in real cities, or in those, with which the fertile imagination of painters has enriched their landscapes; towers, domes, columns, open arches, clusters of pillars, with all their finished ornaments! or else the more pointed forms of Gothic splendour and magnificence, as in Milton's glowing description of

— Some renown'd metropolis,
With glittering spires and pinnacles adorn'd,
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams.

What a different aspect would a city present, in which all the buildings were nearly of the same height, and little to be seen
but

but roofs and chimneys! Such, however, is the appearance of a number of expensive houses in the country. Yet, in my opinion, a mansion with its offices—as being a mass of building independent of all others, the highest parts of which are not eclipsed by the superior height and magnitude of other edifices, but are conspicuous from all parts—has very little relation in its general character to a *house* in a city; it should rather be considered in point of effect, and when viewed at some distance, as a *whole* city under the same circumstances; for, as in that, the parts which are highest and most conspicuous, should, in respect to general form, be most attended to; or, at least, not be the most neglected.

In walking about Blenheim, I have been repeatedly struck with the excellence of the principle displayed by Vanbrugh, in all that regards the summit, whatever objections

may be made to many of the parts in detail. Wherever the smallest portion of it was to be seen, and from whatever quarter, whether between, or above trees, the grandeur, richness, and variety of it, never failed to make a strong impression, and to suggest to me, how insipid a bit of flated roof and a detached chimney, would have been in the same view. It certainly appears to be the most obvious of all reflections, that as the highest part of an object is the most seen, the form of it should be the most studied; but look at our houses, and you would suppose that it had seldom occurred to the builders, or that it was considered by them as a matter of little consequence. On this subject we have received an important lesson, from one whom Swift has represented, as an architect, not only without lecture, but without thought.*

* Van's genius, without thought or lecture,
Is hugely turn'd to architecture.

Vanbrugh's aim in decorating the summit of Blenheim, was to produce richness and variety, and still to preserve the idea of massiveness; and where an artist of genius has any point strongly in view, and pursues it with enthusiasm, he will generally go beyond the mark: what he does produce, however, will not have that worst of faults, insipidity. The enthusiasm of Michael Angelo, which produced the grandest and most striking attitudes, at other times led him to twist the human figure into such singular and capricious forms, as border on caricatura: so Vanbrugh, by pursuing his favourite ideas, may have made some of the parts more broken, or more massive (especially in the summit) than was necessary for his own purposes; but his defects should be corrected, like those of Michael Angelo, by a Raphael in architecture, not by a Carlo Marat; and even then, though the style would

would be purer, and altogether more excellent, it might lose something of original character; and of that, perhaps, inseparable mixture of excellencies and blemishes, which sometimes appear to belong to each other, and to strengthen the general effect.

It was natural that Vanbrugh should succeed in those points, to which he sacrificed so many other considerations; but for that degree of richness and diversity in the summits, which accords with greater purity and elegance, and for the enchanting effects of those summits when mixed with trees and scenery, we must have recourse to the pictures of the great masters, and to many of the magnificent villas in Italy, and in other countries, where our taste for laying every thing open, has not prevailed. Those who have no opportunity of examining the real buildings, may yet, from the numerous representations of them, and from the various architectural

architectural inventions and combinations displayed in the works of painters, find examples of a number of different gradations, from the most splendid and varied summits, to the flat roof with plain unadorned parapets. All of them have their distinct characters of grandeur, of variety, of richness, of elegance, or of simplicity; from which the judicious architect, and the judicious painter, will select what suits the idea they mean to impress. I have mentioned the flat roof with the simple parapet, as between that, and the terras walk under the same circumstances, there is a very close affinity; both of them admitting of enrichments and variations, nearly in the same style. The same comparison, also, which has been drawn between the raised terras with its parapet, and a gravel walk with the ground sloping from it, may, with equal propriety, be made between the flat summit of a house (whether plain or decorated,)

rated,) and the sloping roof.* The summit of a house may indeed, from many points, be considered as an elevated architectural fore-ground, where objects, though distant from the eye, are strongly marked from their situation and character; and the same causes which produce grandeur and variety in the terras below the eye, will produce them above it. Whatever is sloping, has, generally speaking, less of grandeur, than what is abrupt, or perpendicular; what has a thin edge, than what is broad and projecting; what is slight and fragile, than what is strong and massive; and the edge of the sloping roof, and that of the gravel walk, are also alike incapable of receiving decorations.

With respect to the beautiful in building, Mr. Burke has not entered into any particulars; but has left us to collect its causes

* *Essay on the Decorations, &c.* p. 164.

from the general tenor of his *Essay*, as well as its distinction from the sublime in similar objects. The principles which he has there laid down are so just, and are so happily explained and enforced, that they may readily be applied to buildings, as to all other objects; though with certain exceptions and modifications, which arise from the nature of architecture. These chiefly regard waving lines, the beauty of which was so enthusiastically admired, and so ingeniously set forth, by Hogarth;* and since more fully considered and illustrated by Mr. Burke.

At

* Hogarth had a most enthusiastic admiration of what he called the line of beauty, and enthusiasm always leads to the verge of ridicule, and seldom keeps totally within it. My father was very much acquainted with him, and I remember his telling me, that one day Hogarth, talking to him with great earnestness on his favourite subject, asserted, that no man thoroughly possessed with the true idea of the line of beauty, could do any thing in an ungraceful manner: "I myself," added he, "from my perfect knowledge of it, should not hesitate in what manner I should present any thing to the greatest monarch." "He happened," said my father, "at that moment, to be

" fitting

At one period, the architects throughout Europe, were extremely fond of waving lines. I recollect many public edifices at Rome, and at Naples, in that style, the false taste of which struck me at the time ; for it is obvious that the first principle in all architecture, whatever its style, must be the appearance, as well as the reality of firmness and stability ; and whatever gives an idea of a false, or uncertain bearing, contradicts that first principle. On that account, twisted columns have very justly been objected to : and though some of the greatest masters have introduced them into their pictures, not only those, whose style of painting has been

“ sitting in the most ridiculously awkward posture I ever beheld.”

Mr. Burke has, I think, very justly rejected the idea of any particular line completely beautiful, and therefore beautiful in preference to all others ; and in that sense I understand those two lines of Mr. Knight—

“ Curse on the pedant-jargon that defines
“ Beauty’s unbounded forms to given lines.”

distinguished

distinguished as the ornamental style, but even the painters of the Roman school, yet they have rarely been employed in the more massive parts of real buildings. But on the other hand, where the principle I mentioned is not affected, waving lines of every varied and playful form, have constantly been made use of, and constitute the chief beauty of some of the most ornamental and highly finished parts.

Natural objects are chiefly made up of different gradations of waving lines ; and strait lines being rare, and proceeding more frequently from design than from accident, have in them an unnatural, or at least an artificial appearance. The reverse is true with respect to architecture : strait lines are in its very essence ; and any attempt to avoid them, must in general appear unnatural, or affected. Its curves also are regular and uniform ; and those waving lines, whose easy,

but

but perpetually varying deviations give such a charm to other objects, must necessarily, from the principle I mentioned, be chiefly confined to the less essential parts. All this indeed has been so generally understood, and followed in practice, that I should not have dwelt upon it even so long as I have, but for the sake of pointing out the reason, why one essential cause of the beautiful cannot take place, in the general forms of buildings; and why angles, which certainly are not beautiful separately considered, must perpetually occur. But it may also be observed, that among the more essential parts of architecture, those are the most beautiful, which either form an easy curve, or, from their round and polished surface, insensibly steal from the eye, and thereby approach most nearly to the effect of the waving line; such as columns, arches, domes, &c.

No building is more universally admired for its beauty, than the temple of the Sybil at Tivoli. Let us then consider, what are the qualities of beauty according to Mr. Burke, and how far they apply to beautiful buildings in general, and to that in particular. Those qualities are, “First, to be comparatively small. Secondly, to be smooth. Thirdly, to have a variety in the direction of the parts; but, fourthly, to have those parts not angular, but melted as it were into each other. Fifthly, to be of a delicate frame, without any remarkable appearance of strength. Sixthly, to have the colour clear and bright, but not very strong and glaring.” The temple I have just mentioned, has, I think, as much of those chief principles of general beauty, as the particular principles of architecture will allow of: it is circular; surrounded by columns detached from the body of the building; it is

light and airy; of a delicate frame; in a great measure free from angles; and comparatively small. I am now speaking of it as it must have been in its perfect state, when the tint of the stone, and the finishing and preservation of all the parts, corresponded with the beauty of its general form. Its actual state suggests many reflections, on the effect of partial ruin and decay; I shall, however, only add for the present, that as a farther proof of its beauty, Claude has repeated it much more frequently in his landscapes than any other building.

With regard to the beauty arising from smoothness in the surface, and softness in the colour of buildings, I cannot forbear mentioning a picture of his, which I have cited, in some measure on the same account, in a former part;* I mean the seaport that did belong to Mr. Lock. I do so,

* *Essay on the Picturesque*, p. 47, 1st edit.—p. 395, Appendix, 2d edit.

because

because it is not only one of the best painted pictures, of that studious observer of what is beautiful in art and in nature, but also one of the best preserved: and consequently, the colours remain nearly in their original purity. The *forms* of the buildings in that picture, though greatly to be admired for a mixture of beauty and grandeur, are not what I am now speaking of, but the effect of their smoothness, and the tenderness of their hue, particularly of the more distant one; to which the cool morning vapour, so wonderfully expressed by the painter, adds, a still greater softness. I could wish that any person who well recollects, or can again examine the picture, would reflect on the peculiar beauty (in its strictest sense) which arises from the even surface, and silver purity of tint in that farthest building—from the soft haze of the atmosphere, and the aerial perspective produced by the union of

these circumstances, which, without any false indistinctness, or uncertainty of outline, make the architecture retire from the eye, and melt into the distance. When this union, and the character it gives to the picture, have made their full impression, let him imagine one alteration to take place; namely, that in both the buildings the present surface should be changed, for the appearance of a rough dark-coloured stone. I believe there can be no doubt (even supposing the same forms to remain) how much their beauty would be diminished, though their grandeur might possibly be increased. But let him proceed still farther, and take away in idea the other circumstances of beauty, which in Grecian architecture, are always in some degree mixed with those of grandeur; and which may account for that air of elegance, which prevails even in the most majestic among them. Let all the buildings in

in the picture have bulk and massiveness only, but so disposed, as to impress the fullest and most awful ideas of those qualities : let them be composed of a few large parts, but without lightness and airiness, or any of those highly finished ornaments, which give such grace to the buildings as they now stand ; then, if the universal feeling of mankind would pronounce, that to deprive objects of the qualities which Mr. Burke has assigned to beauty, would make them cease to be beautiful, and if the substituting of those which he has assigned to the sublime, would give them that character, and no other—then the distinction he has made, is founded in truth and nature.

This leads me to consider, whether by rendering such buildings picturesque, we should not equally destroy their beauty. For the purpose of this enquiry, I could wish that any person, who was desirous of

attending to the subject, and who had before him the print of the sea-port I have been mentioning, would reflect on a circumstance which I have not dwelt upon, in the distinction between the beautiful and the sublime—that of symmetry. I wish him to observe, how the continuity, succession, and correspondence of the lines and parts, make the eye glide easily from one to the other. First, let him observe the unbroken succession of the columns in the round portico, and that of the cornice and the balustrade on the top of it; then the symmetry of the two square towers in the farthest building, and the effect of that symmetry in their perspective gradation; as likewise of all the lines, as they go off in the same direction towards the misty horizon.* When he has gradually considered

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* I am here speaking of symmetry, not merely as an object of the understanding, but also as it affects the sense, by the ease

and fixed in his mind the whole arrangement, continuity, and dependance of one part upon another, let him suddenly conceive the whole, broken and disturbed. Where the eye now follows the winding columns of the portico, and finds the same line continued in the cornice, and then again in the balustrade, it might see an unconnected group of pillars, with part of the entablature and balusters remaining; then a sudden break, and then other mutilated parts, the ground being strewed with fallen capitals, fragments of ornaments, and masses of stone. In the farther building the two towers might have fallen in unequally, and where the doors and windows had been, wide shattered openings might appear, with

ease and facility with which the eye follows correspondent lines. The more distinct that correspondence, the greater that facility; and this seems to me to be one principal cause of the difference of character, between the Grecian and the Gothic architectures: the symmetry of the former is obvious—that of the latter is often concealed by the intricacy of its parts.

bits of mouldings decayed and confused. I am not here supposing, what would be most favourable to my argument, that all this were to be seen in the crude state of sudden ruin ; I suppose it to be mellowed by time, and adorned, as usual, by the painter, with many circumstances of beauty, mixed with what was abrupt and picturesque. No man can be more ready to acknowledge the charms of buildings in such a state ; yet still I will ask, can the same title suit both states of these buildings ? can that which was designed with the most studied attention to the arrangement and harmony of its parts, to the choice and execution of its ornaments, remain equally beautiful, or retain the same character, when all those circumstances which the architect intended as beauties, are mutilated and defaced ?

It may be objected, that, according to what I have said in a former part upon the principle

principle of insensible transitions,* a building in ruin is often more strictly beautiful than it was when entire, as the lines must then have been more distinct and hard; for it is clear that the ivy, shrubs and vegetation, which usually accompany old ruins, render their lines more soft and melting into each other. This is an objection which ought to be fairly met, and fully answered; for the principle applies universally. But whence does this softness, whence do these insensible transitions arise? from vegetation; and there cannot be any comparison between vegetation, and brick or stone, in point of softness of effect. The comparison ought to be made between entire buildings, and buildings when broken and shattered; the other circumstances, are hardly less foreign to a building, than the foliage of an over-hanging tree which might happen to grow near it. It is true that there are vegetable

* *Essay on Artificial Water*, p. 118.

productions in a manner belonging to old walls, such as mosses, &c. the tints of which are extremely soft, as well as their general appearance; and, on that account, they may seem to have just pretensions to beauty. But as they announce something of age, decay, and abandonment, the mind, from the powerful and extensive influence of that principle, called *association of ideas*, is unwilling to give them a title, which, as I conceive, implies the freshness of youth; or, at least, a state of high and perfect preservation.

Before I proceed any farther on this subject, I will offer a few remarks on the above-mentioned principle of association. All external objects affect us in two different ways; by the impression they make on the senses, and by the reflections they suggest to the mind. These two modes, though very distinct in their operations, often unite in producing one effect; the reflections of the mind, either

strength-

strengthening, weakening, or giving a new direction, to the impression received by the eye. In a piece of natural scenery, for instance,—whether it be confined or extensive, a wood, a river, or a distant view,—every eye is more or less pleased, with a happy combination of forms, colours, lights and shadows: but, together with these, other considerations proceeding from the mind only; are often imperceptibly blended; in most of which, utility has a principal share. The different qualities and uses of trees; the advantages of a river to commerce, to agriculture, or manufactures; the local geography and history of an extensive prospect, are all considerations totally distinct from the sense of seeing, and from the combinations which affect it; yet they have a known, and in many cases a very strong influence on its pleasures. From the force of this association, places of great celebrity are viewed with much more delight, than those which are little known, though of equal,

equal, or greater, beauty: and, I believe, it would be difficult for a man of poetical enthusiasm, to judge impartially between a beautiful scene in some obscure district, and one in the classic regions of Greece,

“ Where not a mountain rears its head unsung.”

If this be true of natural scenery in all its characters of grand, beautiful, or picturesque, the case is much stronger in those arts, where there is a constant reference to the understanding, such as architecture. On that account, the beauty of a building considered as such, depends on symmetry and design; consequently what is foreign to it (as vegetation is) cannot supply the place of that appropriate beauty, and make it beautiful as a building, though by such means, an object of a mixed character, with many qualities of beauty, may be formed. The ruins, therefore, in Claude’s pictures, having for the most part their sudden breaks and abruptnesses disguised by vegetation, and all

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the stronger marks of violence or decay softened by distance, are, in many instances, beautiful in point of outline, considered generally as objects, not as pieces of architecture; they are beautiful as to their general tint, and light and shadow, but not in regard to symmetry and design, for they are mutilated and irregular; and it seems obvious, that an object is most beautiful in its own proper character, when in its most perfect state. Still, however, from the reasons I have mentioned, the ruins in Claude's pictures, cannot be said to interfere with that select idea of beauty, which he sought after.

But, besides the softness and play of outline that they receive from vegetation, his ruins have another claim to the character, which so prevails in his landscapes. I have before observed, that buildings of Grecian architecture, even where their prevailing character is grandeur, have yet an air of elegance

elegance mixed with it; so, likewise, when they become picturesque from being in ruin, the character of beauty still lingers about their forms and their ornaments, however disfigured; a circumstance, which very essentially distinguishes them from the ruins of castles, and mere massive building. This may account for the very few examples in Claude's pictures, of ruins totally without ornament, and with their broken parts strongly marked. Two instances occur to me in the *Liber Veritatis*; the first, of a shattered castle on a rock, in one of the only two sea-storms of his painting: the second, of a singular fort of hovel in the *Temptations of St. Anthony*; and both these exceptions, more strongly prove the motive of his general choice, and of these deviations from it, than if they had not existed. Another circumstance is, that he rarely painted ruins in the immediate foreground;

ground; perfect architecture continually: which seems to imply, that in his opinion what was broken and abrupt, should not, in such scenes as he represented, be brought too near the eye, but kept at such a distance, that the whole might in a great degree be blended together. This leads me to another consideration, namely, that as almost all the pictures of Claude, are Mornings and Evenings of the mildest kind, the lights and shadows are such as take off from all harshness, and give to every thing an air of softness and repose; both of them qualities very different from those of the picturesque, which demands sudden lights, and deep shadows.

It is not a little remarkable, that of the two most celebrated of mere landscape painters, Gaspar, and Claude, the one who painted wild, broken, picturesque nature, should have hardly any of those buildings which are allowed to be

most

most picturesque ; and that the other, whose attention to all that is soft, engaging, and beautiful, is almost proverbial, should comparatively have but few pictures without them. As these two great painters knew perfectly the effects which they intended to produce, and the means of producing them, it may be useful to enquire, whether they did not proceed upon principle, in this seeming deviation from it. I have remarked in a former part,* in the case of two eminent painters of figures, how much an exclusive attention to what is strictly beautiful, will lead towards monotony ; it is not less true in landscape. Claude, probably, was sensible of this, and must have felt that by confining himself chiefly to morning and evening lights, he precluded himself from a number of effects, of a singular and striking kind ; but

* *Essay on the Picturesque*, pages 72—4, 1st edit.; 78—80, 2d edit.

which

which did not accord with his conceptions of beauty. It was therefore very natural, that on account of this voluntary exclusion, he should seek for every variety which would accord with such conceptions ; and nothing could answer his purpose so well, as the ruins he saw around him. They exhibit great diversity of form, and they both give and recal ideas of beauty and magnificence ; and he found that, by keeping them in the second ground, by mixing them with foliage, and surrounding them with his atmosphere and mild light and shadow, their particular abruptness would vanish, their general variety only remain.

Gaspar Poussin, the rival and cotemporary of Claude, like him lived at Rome ; and he who gave such masterly representations of all that is broken in ground, in branches, and foliage, could not be insensible to similar effects in ruins ; but if I may be

allowed to conjecture why he did not represent, what seems so congenial to his own character, and that of the scenes he painted, I should say, that it was precisely that very passion, and strong predilection for similar effects in natural objects, which prevented him. Examine his pictures and prints with that idea: observe his elegant, but unbroken and unornamented buildings, and see how happily and unaffectedly they are contrasted with his broken ground, and wild thickets, and all the play of his foliage.

This seems a proper place to remark one great use of buildings in landscape—that of a resting place to the eye, on which it may fix and dwell, and find relief from the intricacy, the indistinctness, and the monotony of mere earth and vegetation. On that account, where there is much intricacy in the forms and dispositions of trees, foliage, and ground, should it be continued in the buildings

ings also, the eye would want a necessary relief. In Claude, there is little abruptness in the parts, and a general repose is diffused over the whole; and, therefore, broken buildings, such as he selected, form the degree of contrast he had occasion for. In Gaspar, the general landscape is broken and intricate, but the buildings which he has chosen, give to the eye a firm and solid resting place; and it may be observed, also, that strait lines and angles, besides their being necessary to the appearance of uprightness and stability in buildings, are also of use in detaching them from the surrounding objects, and in contrasting them with the playful forms of vegetation; and, therefore, if buildings could be made to look, and to be equally firm without them, the result of the whole would be much less pleasing.

As buildings in their various styles, are confessedly among the most striking ornaments of landscape, it appears almost incre-

dible that there should be a landscape painter, and one of the highest class, who seldom painted any buildings whatsoever; yet, I believe, that was the case with Salvator Rosa. In his landscapes, few traces of architecture appear, or even of human habitation. He seems to have thought our puny efforts, unworthy of being allied with those vast piles of stone, whose savage grandeur his pencil alone has truly exhibited; and that the dens and caverns which they afforded, were the proper dwellings for the savage race, whom he has placed amidst such scenes. But, besides these reasons, drawn from the poetry of his art, he might have had others, more immediately drawn from the art itself; which may help to confirm my conjectures with respect to Claude and Gaspar. It is obvious that any building of Grecian architecture, either entire, or ruined, would have been out of character in such scenes; cottages, and hovels, however picturesque, too mean and

and familiar: ruined castles and towers appear to be the buildings most analogous; but the same reasons that possibly induced Gaspar to avoid ruins, would act with double force upon S. Rosa. It is, however, very certain, that the same touch, which so powerfully characterized the solid masses and the broken fragments of rocks, would no less forcibly have marked those of ruins; and we might expect, from a general idea of his style, that they would form a distinguished part of many of his pictures: as they do not, and as his rejection of them, and almost of buildings altogether from his landscapes,*

* I mean where the landscape is principal, and the scenery, such as he usually painted—wild and romantic. In the famous picture at Lord Townfend's, there is a column, with fragments of architectural ornaments; for the subject, if it be Marius amidst the ruins of Carthage, required such an accompaniment. In one or two of his etchings, there are also bits of architecture introduced with equal propriety; and instead of his broken trees, they are accompanied with cypresses. All these instances prove that he did not work capriciously, but on settled principles.

could not arise from ignorance of their forms, or from inability to represent them, it must have been founded upon principle; and the reasonings and feelings of such a mind as his in all that respects his own art, are well worth attending to.

Having mentioned what seem to me the most characteristic marks of the grand, and the beautiful in buildings; and having offered some reasons, why the use, and the neglect of those buildings which are generally allowed to be picturesque, should in many pictures be so contrary to what we might expect, from the general style, and turn of mind of those who painted them; I shall now treat more directly, of what I am most nearly concerned in—the distinct character of the picturesque in buildings.

I have already touched upon it in an early part of my first Essay :* I have there shewn

* *Essay on the Picturesque*, p. 46, 1st edit.—p. 62, 2d edit.

how

how time and decay convert a beautiful building into a picturesque one, and by what process the change is operated. That the character of every building must be essentially changed by decay, is very apparent; and, likewise, that the alteration must be in proportion as the original character or design, is obliterated by that decay: a building, however, does not immediately change its original character, but parts with it by degrees; and seldom, perhaps, loses it entirely. It will probably be acknowledged, that a beautiful building is in its most beautiful state, when the columns are in every part round, and smooth, the ornaments entire, and the whole design of the artist in every part complete. If this be granted, then from the first moment that the smoothness, the symmetry, the design of such a building suffers any injury, it is manifest that its beauty is thereby diminished: and

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it may be observed, that there is a state of injury and decay, in which we only perceive and lament the diminution of beauty, without being consoled for it by any other character. In proportion as the injury increases, in proportion as the embellishments that belong to architecture, the polish of its columns, the highly finished execution of its capitals and mouldings, its urns and statues, are changed for what may be called the embellishments of ruins, for incrustations and weather stains, and for the various plants that spring from, or climb over the walls—the character of the picturesque prevails over that of the beautiful; and at length, perhaps, all smoothness, all symmetry, all trace of design are totally gone. But there may still remain an object which attracts notice. Has it then no character when that of beauty is departed? is it ugly? is it insipid? is it merely curious? Ask the painter, or the picturesque traveller; they

they never abandon a ruin to the mere antiquary, till none but an antiquary would observe it. Whatever then has strong attractions as a visible object, must have a character; and that which has strong attractions for the painter, and yet is neither grand nor beautiful, is justly called picturesque.

Take again a building, the sole character of which is grandeur. On that, the changes are less sensible, than on the delicate qualities of beauty; but when the walls begin to lose their firmness, and in parts to totter; when large cracks and breaches appear, that species of architectural grandeur, which is derived from one of its greatest sources—solidity, is diminished in proportion. It is long, however, before the picturesque prevails over that original grandeur; from the first approaches of decay, they are indeed in some degree mixed and combined with each other; but the ruins of Agrigentum and Selinus will testify, that though beauty

in buildings may be destroyed by time and decay, grandeur resists their power; and by a singular agreement, these most solid bodies, resemble what Milton says of immaterial substance, and

Cannot but by annihilating die.

Buildings, in which the picturesque character is originally very prevalent, must have that character more immediately and rapidly augmented by decay, than such as are simply grand, or beautiful. The chaste and noble style of Grecian architecture, does not admit of a number of sudden breaks and variations of form, or of enrichments over a large part of the surface; it therefore never displays a marked picturesque character, till in ruin. But in Gothic buildings, the parts when in their perfect state, are more broken and divided than those of Grecian architecture; they are consequently more exposed to the attacks of time, and shew more plainly the effects of those attacks: the symmetry
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of such parts being also in their perfect state less apparent, their connection and correspondence proportionably disappear, when the members are defaced or destroyed; and I have before observed, that among the various causes of the picturesqueness of ruins, the destruction of symmetry is by no means the least powerful. As abruptness and irregularity are two of the principal sources of that character, it plainly appears, that every building must be more picturesque in a ruinous state, than it was when entire; for, in a perfect habitable building, however abruptly and irregularly the lines of the walls and roofs may cross each other, yet each break that decay occasions in them, at once encreases both their irregularity and their abruptness.

Of all ruins, those of the ancient Greek and Roman buildings are on many accounts the most interesting: in no other buildings are the rival qualities of grandeur and

beauty

beauty so happily united ; and to that union is added the prejudice in favour of their high antiquity, and of their being the productions of two people, renowned for every art and accomplishment, that can raise or adorn our nature.

Next to them, and in some points of view to us still more interesting, are the ruins of abbeys and castles. I have named them together, though nothing can be more strongly contrasted than their two characters. The abbey, built in some sequestered spot, and surrounded by woods, announces religious calm, and security. Its sanctity, even in those early times of turbulence, but likewise of superstition, was thought a sufficient safeguard ; and its structure, though solid and massive, seems designed for ornament, not for defence. All the minute and detached decorations of its outside, the pinnacles, the open-work ; the high and spacious windows divided into small compartments

by the lightest partitions, and enriched with all the refinements of Gothic sculpture, were ill-adapted to defy hostile attacks.

In the castle, every thing proclaims suspicious defiance; the security of strength and precaution. A commanding, or at least an uncommanded situation; high solid walls and towers; the draw-bridge, the portcullis; few apertures, and those small; no breaks nor projections that would interfere with strength and solidity. The ruins of these once magnificent edifices, are the pride and boast of this island: we may well be proud of them; not merely in a picturesque point of view: we may glory that the abodes of tyranny and superstition are in ruin.

In the third degree are old mansion-houses in their various styles: few, however, of those which have been long uninhabited, have stood the shock of time like castles and abbeys; not having been protected like them,

them, either by their own solidity, or by the religious veneration of mankind. But some of these old mansions, that are only in a state of neglect, not of ruinous decay, accompanied by their walled terraces, by their summer-houses covered with ivy, and mixed with wild vegetation, have the most picturesque effect. Where any of them are sufficiently preserved to be capable of being repaired, and are intended to be made habitable, too much caution cannot be used in disturbing their ancient character and accompaniments, by clearing away those disguises and intricacies, which the hand of time has slowly created.

Last of all, are the different cottages, mills, outhouses, and hovels; many of which are in their entire state extremely picturesque, and almost all become so in decay.

The most picturesque *habitable* buildings, are old castles, which were originally formed for

for defence as well as habitation ; for they in general consist of towers of different heights, and of various outworks and projections ; particularly where the abruptness, and irregularity of the ground, has in a manner forced the architect to adopt the same irregularity in the shapes and heights of his buildings.* It is not improbable that

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* The following note is an extract from the letter of a friend, admirably qualified both by his pen and his pencil, to throw light on the whole of this subject.

" When I was at Rome, Zucchi, who married Angelica, was there. He was a great castle-maker, and his mode of composing them, was to draw first a bold and varied outline of the rock, mountain, or eminence upon which his castle was to stand. He then, with according lines, added his castle ; and you would be surprised to find how the imagination is assisted by this practice, and what towers, battlements, and projections are suggested by it, which would not otherwise have been thought of. I always observed that his building was more varied and picturesque, in exact proportion to the taste and happiness with which the foundation-line was struck. How far it might be serviceable to the architect of a refined building to follow this practice, by taking the line of the ground on which it was to stand, by observing what part would be opposed to the sky only, and what others would be backed and accompanied by trees, woods, and hills, and lastly by designing his building according to the shapes those objects might suggest—I know not : but

many of these old castles owe the extreme picturesqueness of their appearance, to their having been built at different times, just as occasion required. By those means, as we well know, a number of common houses become picturesque, the separate parts of which have nothing of that character. Why are they so? Because they are built of various heights, in various directions, and because those variations are sudden and irregular. Architects, like painters, (or to speak more justly, like men of genius and observation in every art,) have in many cases taken advantage of the effects of accident, and have converted the mere shifts of men who went the nearest way to work, into sources of beauty, and decoration. An irregular room, for instance, detached from the body of the

but I am confident that it would be of infinite service to an architect, whose employer wished his house to appear like an ancient castle or fortification, or an irregular picturesque building of any kind."

house,

house, with a low covered passage to it, may have given to architects the idea of pavilions, connected with the house by arcades, or colonnades; but in the use they have made of these accidents, they have proceeded according to the genius of their own art. That of painting admits, and often delights in, irregularity: architecture, though, like other arts, it studies variety, yet it must in general consider that variety as subject to symmetry, especially in buildings on a large scale, and highly decorated; a symmetry not always ostentatiously displayed, but still to be traced through the whole design. In transferring something of the variety and picturesque effect of irregular buildings to regular architecture, the architect proceeds no farther than the buildings themselves: but the painter, from having observed the effect of trees among the irregular parts of old houses, may,

in his pictures, have been induced to add them in correspondent situations to regular pieces of architecture, though he may not have seen them so placed in reality. The mere architect would not place them there; but it is from the joint labours of the two artists, that the improver must form himself.

Some of the most striking and varied compositions, both in painting and in nature, are those where the more distant view (whatever be the degree of its extent) is seen between the stems, and across, and under branches of large trees; and where some of those trees, are very near the eye. But where trees are so disposed, a house with a regular extended front could not be built, without destroying together with many of the trees, the greatest part of such well composed pictures. Now, if the owner of such a spot, instead of making a regular front
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and sides, were to insist upon having many of the windows turned towards those points where the objects were most happily arranged, the architect would be forced into the invention of a number of picturesque forms and combinations, which otherwise might never have occurred to him; and would be obliged to do what so seldom has been done—accommodate his building to the scenery, not make that give way to his building.

Many are the advantages, both in respect to the outside and the inside, that would result from such a method. In regard to the first, it is scarcely possible that a building formed on such a plan, and so accompanied, should not be an ornament to the landscape, from whatever point it might be viewed. Then the blank spaces that would be left where the aspect suddenly changed (which by the admirers of strict regularity would

in regular sweeps from the house, make a formal border round the lawn: so that the building may be viewed from every part of it with little or no interruption. It seems as if the word of command given by Satan to his troops, had been issued by Mr. Brown at the hall door of each place---

Vanguard, to right and left, the front unfold.

It must be owned that the *routine* of a professed improver, is wretched: but still there is a sort of comfort in having things done by a regular practitioner; for as the apothecary in Moliere says, “*Quoi qu'il puisse arriver, on est assuré que les choses font toujours dans l'ordre.*”

Architecture, from the nobleness of its character, and from having been despotic in cities, has seldom deigned to accommodate itself to landscape; but when it was accompanied by the gardens in the old Italian style, a scenery in character was formed

immediately

immediately round it. Gardening, which of late years is become no less absolute in the country, than architecture in towns, has deprived buildings of those characteristic accompaniments, and has left them bare and desolate. The sister art of Painting, will best teach us how to reconcile these two arts to each other; for where trees and garden ornaments, are combined in the pictures of the great masters with the beauties of architecture, they seem placed there---

Pour orner ses attraits, et non pour les cacher.

I shall be pursuing very exactly the plan of this part of my work, by considering the use, which some of the principal painters of different schools and countries have made of buildings, from the highest style of architecture, to the simplest cottage—from those which are in their freshest and most perfect state, to those which time has most defaced and mutilated.

Many of the first great masters of the revived art, Leonardo da Vinci, M. Angelo, Raphael, G. Romano, and others, were architects as well as painters ; and several buildings were executed after their designs, and under their inspection. But I am now considering architecture as it appears in pictures, and mixed with other objects ; and among these great artists Raphael is the only one, who has left a number of historical compositions in which buildings and architecture form so principal a part, as may enable us to form a judgment of the result of the whole. The general character of his architecture, like that of his figures, is a sedate and simple grandeur, equally free from superfluous ornament, and from strongly marked contrasts. Neither in his works, nor those of his followers, shall we find many instances of those singular effects of perspective, of those groups and clusters

clusters of buildings crossing each other in various directions, of those splendid artifices, which may be called the picturesque of regular and entire architecture, in contradistinction to ruins.* I may observe on this occasion, that the landscape-painter makes use of ruins of every kind without scruple, and without much danger of impropriety ; but history-painters are more confined, for there are, comparatively speaking, but few historical subjects where a back-ground of ruins would be strictly proper. As they are, therefore, in some degree precluded

* The following passage from the Abbé Winkleman's History of the Art of Design, plainly shews that the ancients, according to his interpretation, made a distinction between the beautiful and the picturesque :

“ Il più generale, e più rimarchevole distintivo del disegno
 “ del nudo in quel primo stile degli Egizj si è, di non incon-
 “ trarsi mai nelle loro figure se non linee rette, o presso che
 “ rette ; proprietà, che le loro fabbriche distingue, e i loro
 “ ornate. Perciò a lavori egiziani, secondo l'espressione di
 “ Strabone, mancavano e l'aria pittorefca, e le grazie, divi-
 “ nità in Egitto non conosciutte. Πολυτυλος οικος εν Μεμφει
 “ dic' egli parlando d'un tempio di Memfi, ουδεν εχει καριεν—
 “ ουδε γραφικον.”

from buildings in their most picturesque state, (that is, where the variety of forms, tints, and effects, are most sudden and striking,) those painters who were fond of such varieties and of all that is termed picturesque, have sought for them by means not incompatible, with what is due to the dignity and propriety of the historical style. This will clearly appear to any person, who compares the architectural back-grounds of such artists, with those of other masters who studied the higher parts of the art; as for instance, the back-grounds of Raphael and Poussin, with those of P. Veronefe and Rubens. In the works of the two last mentioned painters, those artifices, and that picturesque disposition I mentioned, appear in all their brilliancy; and are perfectly suited to what has very properly been termed the ornamental style, as opposed to the severer character of the Roman and Florentine schools.

I am

I am at present considering buildings and architecture in their relation to history, not to landscape-painting ; for in the specimens of landscape which Raphael has given us in his back-grounds, he has in few instances completely overcome the dryness of his master, P. Perugino ; nor could he, in that branch of the art, enlarge his ideas, from any works of his great inspirer M. Angelo. That branch, in which the moderns have the best claim to superiority over the ancients, was brought to its highest perfection in point of grandeur of style, and richness of colouring, by the artists of the Venetian school, and more particularly by their chief boast, the divine Titian. As far as I can recollect, Titian has seldom, if ever, introduced any finished pieces of architecture, into the near parts of his mere landscapes ; nor indeed any buildings as principal objects occupying a large part of the picture, such as we see in the landscapes of some other painters,

painters, and particularly of Claude Lorraine : but in his historical pictures (to use a very common, but improper term of distinction) columns, arches, ballustrades, serve as magnificent frames to those back-grounds, which have been models to all succeeding painters.

It seems to me that the character of the architecture made use of by the Roman and Florentine schools, taken in a general view, and with the exceptions which in such views will occur, is a sedate, solemn grandeur. That of the Venetians, taken in the same general manner, a gay and splendid magnificence. Such general characters will of course vary in each school according to the disposition of the particular master ; and I think in most instances it may be observed, that the style of architecture, is in unison with that of the figures. Titian, in whose figures and general conceptions, there is often a simplicity unknown to Paul Veronese, or to Tintoret, has the same comparative

rative simplicity in his architecture; still, however, it is of a very different cast from that of either of the schools I have mentioned. But of all the painters who have flourished since the revival of the art, none have equalled Paul Veronese, in the festive pomp, in the theatrical splendour and magnificence of his buildings. The profusion of columns, open galleries, ballustrades, balconies; of buildings seen across and behind other buildings, with various and singular effects of lineal and aerial perspective—admirably accord with the profusion of figures with which he has peopled them, and with the studied contrasts of groups and attitudes, and the richness of their dresses. As his subjects were frequently festivals and banquets, to these may often be added the rich tints and ornaments of gold and silver plate, of urns, cups, vases, &c. The immense scale of his pictures, the facility with which

which the whole is conducted, and the extreme clearness and brilliancy of that whole, have so captivated his countrymen, that his works are more celebrated at Venice, than even those of his more exalted rival, Titian.

Tintoret, less dignified in his figures than either of his cotemporaries, was full of singular and capricious inventions; and his architecture partakes of the same character.*

I have

* No painter, whose subjects were serious, ever placed the human figure so much, and so frequently out of the perpendicular, as Tintoret. The same liberty could not so well be taken with architecture; but there is a drawing of his, that was in Sir Joshua Reynolds's collection, and is now in my possession, where the subject has enabled him to indulge his favourite propensity on a building. He has represented the dream of a Pope; who is lying in a state bed adorned with a canopy, and supported by emblematical figures: his attendants are sleeping in the room in various and singular attitudes. Over the door, a Cathedral church seems to be tumbling toward the Pope, while a Monk on his knees, with his hand stretched towards the portico, appears in the act of supporting it. Rays of light issue from the church, and, illuminating the face of the Pope, glance upon the different ornaments of the bed, and on the sleeping attendants. Two other figures are at the door, the one lifting up the curtain of it, and discovering part of an inner room, in which is a strong effect of sunshine; the other advancing

I have now stated what appear to me to be the distinct characters of those buildings, which the painters of the schools I have mentioned, have introduced into their pictures. It would be much more material to point out the causes of that difference of character. Without presuming that I shall be able to do it satisfactorily, I will mention what has occurred to me on the subject.

I went to Venice from Rome, full of Raphael and the Vatican, and of the works of many great masters of the other schools, that are collected in that capital of the arts. In most of them, buildings and architecture of the highest kind are introduced, yet those of the Venetian painters had a

advancing into the bedchamber. The whole composition, in point of singularity and richness of invention, of no less singular effects of light and shadow, of the style and disposition of the ornaments of the bed, the tables, and of all the furniture, is in the highest degree characteristic of that wild and capricious, but truly original painter.

new and a very forcible effect upon my mind: and, as far as I can recollect, I passed the same judgment upon them that I do now; but I was not then in the same habit of reflecting on my own ideas and impressions. If then the architecture of that school has a striking effect, and one of a different kind from those of the other schools, it is worth while to endeavour, at least, to investigate the principles on which they proceeded; and to observe whether those principles are constant and uniform. Such enquiries will not be useful to the painter only, but in many cases to the architect; for whatever in any way relates to the effect of buildings, cannot be totally foreign to his art: and as there are scenes which call for a style of architecture similar to that of the Roman or Florentine, so there are others, to which that of the Venetian school is no less adapted.

I have

I have already considered the general causes of grandeur and beauty. As massiveness and solidity belong to the former, so lightness, and detached parts no less belong to the latter: what is light, in both senses of the word, accords with ideas of beauty, and particularly with those of gaiety, and splendour. We often say of a building that it is light and airy, when the air appears to have a free passage round the parts of it; an idea which peculiarly applies to open colonnades. All these effects are increased if the colour of the stone be also light, and clear.

If we attend to the practice of the Venetian painters in these points, we shall find how fond they were of introducing open porticos and colonnades, and of displaying near the eye the full effect of their light and airy character. Paul Veronese, who indeed never scrupled to sacrifice propriety to effect,

has placed the Magdalen washing our Saviour's feet, under a magnificent portico, decorated with every rich and splendid ornament. The view is through the columns to the open air, not towards the interior building; and this I think is a circumstance to which he was generally attentive: he likewise took care to dispose his columns so, that a large portion of the back-ground, and particularly of the sky, should be seen through them. The effect of this disposition will best be perceived, by comparing it with that of Raphael in a scene of the same kind. In the cartoon, which represents the apostle curing the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple, he likewise has placed the figures in a portico; and in allusion to the name of the gate, has given to the architecture a degree of richness and decoration, beyond that which appears in any of his other compositions. The columns are

twisted;

twisted;* their shafts are enriched with figures of boys amidst festoons of foliage; but they are very close to each other, the view is inwards towards the temple, and only a very small portion of the sky is seen. This alone would be sufficient to occasion the difference, which is so striking, between these two compositions, in point of airiness and

* I have already stated the principle on which twisted columns may be objected to; but in this instance, Raphael would be justified in having introduced them, even supposing him to have disapproved of such a style of architecture on other occasions. There are two antique columns at Rome, of the same form with those he has painted, which tradition has ascribed to the Temple of Solomon: they were in old St. Peter's, and are now in some part of the present church. I believe there is no reason to suppose, that they ever did belong to the Temple of Jerusalem: on the contrary, the style of them is of a much lower age than that of the destruction of the Temple; but having been long objects of a sort of veneration, it was natural for Raphael to introduce them. Perhaps Bernini was influenced in some degree by this consideration (though he was always very fond of twisting) in applying that form of column to the Baldaquin of the high altar of St. Peter's, where however it has a very good effect: for as the chief objection to twisted columns is their seeming unfitness to support a great weight, and as their merit is a look of ornament, they are certainly most proper in things of mere decoration, where there is little appearance of pressure from above.

lightness of effect: but there is another cause, distinct from architecture, which clogs that of Raphael; and which deserves to be mentioned, as it shews the different character, and aim, of the two painters. The figures in this cartoon are of their natural size, while the columns are on so much smaller a scale, that the bodies of the figures which are beyond them, and therefore further removed from the eye, are as large, or larger, than their shafts; and consequently fill up the space, which was already sufficiently crowded. It may be alleged, that a great history painter, whose mind was occupied with the character and expression of his figures, is justified in having sacrificed propriety, and even probability, in an inferior branch of the art; and the judgment of Sir Joshua Reynolds on the small proportion of the boats in the picture of the miraculous draught of fishes, may be brought in defence

fence of a similar breach of propriety in architecture: still I think that the necessity, or at least the expediency of the sacrifice (as perhaps in the circumstance of the boats) ought to be manifest. But here the case is different; for the architecture is a very principal part of the picture, attracts the eye from its ornaments, and appears to have been very much studied; it seems to me, however, not only to want airiness, but grandeur; and even in that last point the Roman school may sometimes condescend to take lessons from the Venetian, though in general so much superior to it in dignity. I have in my mind a composition of Titian, representing the Virgin and child placed on an altar in a sort of portico, with other figures on the steps of the altar: only two columns are seen, the tops of which are supposed to be out of the picture. The manner in which this architecture is introduced, produces a very grand,

and at the same time a very picturesque effect ; these columns, from being brought near the eye, and in their full proportion, present an imposing mass ; and as their bases are placed on different levels, their symmetry, though not doubtful, is not obvious : the two columns are sufficient to impress the idea of magnificent architecture ; yet from that circumstance, room enough is given for the figures, and space enough for that appearance of air, which the Venetian painters were so desirous of producing.* It will hardly be suspected, after what I have said of Vanbrugh's buildings, that in my opinion a light, airy, and detached style, ought to be the sole aim either of painters or architects ; and that Raphael would have acted with more judgment, if instead of the

* This is the picture, of which Sir Joshua Reynolds, in his Tour through Flanders (page 45,) has so admirably described the character and effect ; contrasting them with those of a picture of Rubens. Unfortunately he has made no observations on the architecture in either of them.

noble but solemn architecture, and correspondent light and shadow, which he has made choice of in the school of Athens, the miracle of Bolsenna, the Heliodorus, he had displayed in those pictures, the blaze of day-light, and all the splendid decorations of P. Veronese. I wished to point out, as far as I am capable, what are the principles of lightness, airiness, and splendour in buildings, and in what instances they may be compatible with grandeur.

One class of buildings, I have not yet touched upon---that of Bridges. In every style of scenery they are objects of the most interesting kind: whether we consider their great and obvious utility, and the almost intrinsic beauty of their forms; or their connection with the most pleasing scenes in nature, and the charms which they add to water, and receive from it in return. The simplest construction of a stone bridge, and

therefore probably the earliest, is where long flat stones are placed upon more thick and massive ones: such bridges we often see over brooks in villages, and they are admirably suited to that style and scale of scenery.

Such a construction seems less adapted to bridges of great extent: there is, however, an instance of a most stupendous bridge in China, built on that simple plan. Three hundred piers are joined together without arches, by blocks of black marble, each of which is fifty-four feet in length, and six feet in breadth and in thickness: seven of these marble slabs laid parallel to each other, make the breadth of the bridge; the length of which, exclusive of the abutments, must be sixteen thousand two hundred feet, that is above three miles in length.* When we

* This account is taken from Fischer's Architecture. He has given a print of the bridge in book 3, plate 14; but after describing the particulars, has the following reference: "Vide Martin Mart, who measured them very exactly. Atlas of China, page 124."

consider

consider the vast expence and difficulty, even under the most favourable circumstances, of procuring and transporting above two thousand pieces of marble of such dimensions, it does not seem improbable, that this bridge was erected before arches were known in China; and consequently that we owe this surprising work, not to ideas of magnificence, but to the ignorance of a principle in building, with which every common stone-mafon is practically acquainted.

The contrivance of a wooden centre, on which a circular wall of brick, stone, or any hard material might be built, so as to remain self-supported after the removal of the original support, nay itself capable of sustaining the greatest weights—implies a very advanced state of the arts. Accordingly it is generally thought, that in the countries known to the ancient Greeks and Romans, no example of an arch can be produced, prior to the

Macedonian

Macedonian conquest; though buildings of great extent and magnificence had been executed in them, long before that period.

This invention of arches, is an epoch of great moment in architecture. Openings, formed by the most beautiful curves, were found to be the firmest of all supports; these therefore gave a new character to many buildings, but to none more than to bridges; and when all the circumstances of an arched bridge over a broad and rapid river, from the foundation to the last finishing, are considered, it may be reckoned among the noblest efforts of architecture; uniting, perhaps, in a higher degree than any other building, beauty, grandeur, utility, and real, as well as apparent difficulty of execution.

The two general divisions of architecture in England, the Grecian and the Gothic, are as strongly marked in bridges, as in other buildings. In the old bridges that were built

built in the neighbourhood of castles and abbeys, and probably about the same period, the pointed arches, and the strong projecting buttresses, while they accord with similar forms in the edifices to which those bridges were in some measure appendages, gave to them a remarkable appearance of firmness and resistance to floods, with a peculiar depth and opposition of light and shadow. This agreement between the principal building, (whether a castle, an abbey, or a great mansion,) and that of the bridge which belongs, or seems to belong to it, has not always been attended to in modern improvements. Vanbrugh has given to his bridge at Blenheim, the same character, which prevails in the principal fabrick. Mr. Brown, on the other hand, in the bridge of which he was the architect, has tried the opposite extreme—that of making it the strongest possible contrast to the whole mass of buildings.

ings. Still, however, in one point of view, he did not neglect unity of character; for, as he had banished all richness and effect from his river, he perhaps thought it right to adapt the style of his bridge to that of the water.

But, although it appears to me, that any bridge at Blenheim, required something in its character, more analogous to the established style of architecture at that place, yet I am very far from objecting to plain bridges in general; on the contrary, I think it may safely be asserted, that of all buildings, an arched stone bridge, is that which will bear the greatest degree of plainness and simplicity, without the danger of baldness. The situation of a bridge most commonly confers on it such distinction, that it wants no ornaments to mark it, and to detach it from other objects: then the arches themselves form such grand and beautiful openings,

that

that they require no artificial breaks or embellishments, to disguise or adorn them; and their natural arrangement, is as simple and beautiful as their form: whereas in some of the necessary apertures in other buildings, such as the windows in houses, there is nothing of intrinsic beauty or grandeur; and in their arrangement, the architect is frequently embarrassed how to make beauty accord with convenience.

Where richness, massiveness, depth and variety of light and shadow, are the architect's principal aim, bold, varied, and massive projections, with ornaments of a correspondent character, are the obvious means of producing them. But where his aim is beauty, and that degree and style of lightness which is consistent with a look of solidity, there I believe, such projections, whether plain or ornamented, are highly injurious to the proposed effect; and more

so in a bridge, than in any other building. Perhaps no building of equal solidity has so light an appearance as a light stone bridge; and that I imagine is owing to its having a smaller proportion of what is closed up, compared with what is open; to the form of the openings; and to the peculiarity of situation, from which a bridge seems, as it were, to pass from one side of a river to the other, with something analogous to motion: and this method of considering such objects, though it may appear fantastic, will, I believe, lead to very just principles.

Lightness is in the same degree congenial to beauty, as massiveness is to grandeur. Whatever gives the idea of easy and rapid motion, gives in the same proportion that of lightness; and, on the other hand, whatever impresses the idea of resistance to motion, in the same proportion also, impresses that of massive-

massiveness.* It is true that all solid buildings, though not equally immovable, are in themselves equally motionless; but where the surface is even, the eye glides easily along it, and that ideal motion of the sight, is in some degree transferred to the object itself: all easy transitions, therefore, from one object, or from one part of an object to another, which constitute so principal a cause of beauty, are equally a cause of lightness; and it may be observed, that many of the terms used on such occasions, are borrowed from

* All the circumstances of lightness, and of massiveness together with its resistance to motion, are finely opposed to each other in Milton's battle of the Angels:

Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew.
From their foundations loos'ning to and fro,
They pluck'd the seated hills with all their load,
Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops
Uplifting, bore them in their hands.

The grandeur arising from absolute immobility, is no less finely marked in the same book :

..... Under his burning wheels
The stedfast empyrean shook throughout,
All but the throne itself of God.

thoſe

those of motion. To apply this to the present subject, I must observe, that where the general surface of a bridge is even, and where the projections and ornaments are such as give relief to the whole, but do not break the continuity of its outline, the eye moves easily and rapidly along from arch to arch, till it reaches the opposite side: but that ideal motion, with the lightness which attends it, is gone, whenever the eye is stopped and checked in its progress by projecting parts. Where such projections create any grand, or picturesque effect, they compensate the want of lightness; and in reality cannot be said to injure, but to change the character of the object. In other cases they merely injure it; and of this, in my mind, there cannot be a more glaring example, than in the columns of Blackfriar's Bridge, considering them solely on the principle which I have just been discussing. But indeed it

appears

appears to me, that, in general, columns are ill suited to bridges, as they can hardly be made essential parts of them; and it is an acknowledged maxim, that what is ornamental, should, if possible, appear to answer some purpose of utility: where, indeed, ornaments are trivial in size and consequence, though beautiful in form, such as leaves, scrolls, festoons, &c. utility is not required; but to make columns support some trifle, manifestly placed upon them as an excuse for their introduction, is to degrade a member of such great and obvious use, to a mere gewgaw.

I know that there are very high authorities for introducing columns in bridges, as little more than mere ornaments; and that examples may be produced from the works both of ancient and modern architects, and also in those of some eminent painters: it may appear great presumption in me to question such authorities, still, how-

ever, I must think that in a bridge, columns can hardly be disposed and connected together, in the most advantageous manner;* and of all the members of architecture, they suffer most from disconnection. Two of the noblest effects of columns, are where they are grouped together in a bold projection, as in a portico; or when, upon that grand principle of uniformity and succession, they are arranged on a line in one or more rows, as in most of the ancient temples: but the usual form and construction of a bridge, and the difference in the height of its arches, excludes such arrangements of columns. Those at Blackfriar's, from their detached unconnected position, and from their size being so disproportioned to the great mass of the bridge, (a circumstance of no slight importance) appear to be, what they really are,—bits of useless

* This remark, for very obvious reasons, is not meant to extend to the upper part of covered bridges.

finery. Indeed, from every point, they proclaim themselves to be merely ornamental; and in that, and other respects, they put me in mind of certain human beings that I have sometimes observed parading in more solemn edifices; for these columns appearing to have no business where they are, nor office to perform, and being more decorated than the other parts, distract the attention, and disturb the grandeur and solemnity of the whole mass.

The character of a wooden bridge is as different from that of a stone one, as the nature of the one material, is from that of the other. Stone being ponderous, hard, and, though durable, brittle, is chiefly used in square masses, laid in some cement horizontally on each other; unless when those masses are bound together (as in arches) by mutual pressure. Wood, being much lighter, tougher, and more easily cut into

particular forms, can be made use of without cement, and in any position: for pieces of great length, from their comparative lightness, are easily transported; and from that, and their toughness, can be applied as supports in various directions; while other pieces of different lengths, can in the same manner be applied, so as mutually to bind each other together. From these opposite qualities in the two materials, arises the extreme difference in the character of whatever is built solely with either of them. Many of the wooden bridges in Alpine scenes, with the supports irregularly crossing each other, are universally admired for their wild picturesque character, so well suited to that of the scenery: and even where wooden bridges are executed with great mechanical skill on a regular plan, still a great degree of intricacy, though of a less picturesque kind, must arise from the necessary crossing of

the

the timbers. Intricacy is, therefore, one principal characteristic of wooden bridges, as solidity, and consequently a certain degree of massiveness, is of stone ones; for whatever is solidly built of any hard material (however light the general appearance) must be massive in parts, when compared with that which is formed of wood only, and where the different supports, (whether upright or flanting) together with the pieces, that, by interfecting, tye them together, are all visible. Painters, therefore, when they have wished for that species of intricacy, and for that peculiar lightness of appearance, which arises from the comparative lightness of the material, and the small proportion of what is solid to what is perforated, have made use of wooden bridges only.

But there are likewise very singular and striking effects, produced by a mixture of wood and stone, of which painters have

equally availed themselves. It sometimes happens, where there is a failure in one or more arches of a stone bridge, that a temporary junction is made with timber, which, being found sufficiently strong, is suffered to remain. Such a mixture, most certainly will not answer the purposes of grandeur, or of beauty, but, at the same time, nothing can be more picturesque; and if any additional examples were wanting, to shew the distinction of that character from the two others, nothing could be more convincing than the result of such a mixture. A remarkable instance of it I have seen in prints and drawings of the bridge at Charenton near Paris, which is a perfect model of variety, intricacy, and picturesque irregularity.

Such a bridge, however, can scarcely become an object of imitation, though it might without impropriety be suffered to remain;

and

and the reason of this difference is very obvious. Indolence, or economy, or a fondness for what we have long been acquainted with may be admitted as excuses, for allowing any object to stand in its actual state; particularly where from time and accident it had acquired a picturesque character: but where there was originally a well-connected design, to imitate the incongruous parts which had been added from necessity, and make a new piece of patch-work,---though it might prove that the artist had some skill in copying,*---would shew but little taste or intelligence in his employer.

* The following anecdote is a curious instance, how a talent for exact imitation may be misapplied. In the course of a very long passage to China, the Chaplain's caffock had been so often patched and mended, that it was necessary to have a new one. It was, therefore, sent to a tailor at Canton, that he might make another by it. The Chinese are famous for the exactness of their imitations, and this tailor gave a proof of it in the new caffock; for he so accurately copied every patch and darn of the old one, that, except by the freshness of the new cloth, it was impossible to tell one from the other.

There are other mixtures, however, of stone and wood, which may suit the improver no less than the painter, and which have generally a pleasing, sometimes a grand effect. These are bridges, where the upper part, consisting of strait timbers with little or no intricacy, is supported by square massive stone piers. Of these bridges Claude was particularly fond, and most commonly placed them at some distance from the eye, where the general plan of that part of the picture was nearly on a level : but there is one drawing in the *Liber Veritatis*,* where he has with the most striking effect, introduced one of them in the fore-ground over a rocky river, that appears to pass under it towards the country below ; in which St. Peter's dome is seen at a distance. It is a composition well worth studying ; for it shews, in the most convincing manner, the grandeur

* No. 67.

of massiveness and of strait lines, considered in themselves, and also with regard to their powerful effect in throwing off the distance. If any one could doubt it, let him substitute the most picturesque Alpine bridge of wood only, with the most varied intricacy of form, and he would immediately feel how much the grandeur of the whole scene would be destroyed.

Before I add any thing to what I have already said, on the buildings which painters have made use of in landscape, I will make some general observations on the subject. I have remarked in a former part of this Essay, that the appearance of sloping roofs, is of a character very opposite to that of grandeur; and yet in the landscapes of the greatest masters, and of Titian, the grandest of them all, such roofs constantly appear. This arises in a great degree from the essential difference between the two divisions

divisions of painting. In historical pictures, the character of the subject and of the persons concerned in it, must not be degraded by any meanness in that of the buildings. But in mere landscapes, the grandest natural objects may often be allied with cottages, and not suffer from the alliance: and though temples, palaces, castles, and towers, whether entire, or in ruin, have more of those qualities which attract admiration than the common houses of the country, in many of which little more than the roof is seen—yet it must strike every observer, that painters have more frequently introduced such houses into their landscapes, than from those considerations might have been expected. This I take to proceed, partly from a love of those objects with which they had been early familiarized; and of this, as far as it relates to the Dutch masters, there can be little doubt. But I have, likewise, observed

in

in the more modern Venetian pictures, that the forms of many of the buildings (some of them very peculiar) are of the same character with those of Titian; yet, in several instances, they could not have been imitated from him, having been painted from nature in the Venetian territory. Another cause is the love of naturalness, which in landscape-painting (except where the subject is of a higher kind) ought always to be attended to. Slanting roofs have in general but little to recommend them to the eye; but they are in many countries the most usual covering; and unless the idea of covering, and of the more usual covering, is sometimes given, that of habitation will not be so naturally impressed.

The next great masters in the higher style of landscape, and not less in historical painting, are the Caracci, and their illustrious scholars. Among so many men

of

of original conceptions, and whose originality was fostered, not checked or perverted, by the liberal method of instruction in that famous academy, much variety of character in every part of their productions will occur; but the general style of their architecture in their historical pictures, appears to have been (like that of their figures) a medium between the more simple and severe dignity of the Roman and Florentine schools, and the splendid richness of the Venetian; the effects of which last school in every way, they studied with great assiduity. An example of that middle style may be given from a picture of one of the greatest among the Bolognese masters—the Martyrdom of St. Andrew, by Domenichino, which is etched by Carlo Maratti. There is an open range of columns, and the view is through them towards the outward air, which gives great lightness to the whole;

but

but they are on one strait line, directly opposite to the eye; and on the left hand of the picture, the wall of the inclofed place in which the scene is represented, is quite plain. By means of these circumstances, he has given to the general composition, that balance of repose and simplicity, which, in his judgment, was best suited to the occasion.

The buildings in their landscapes, have many excellencies highly proper to be studied, but which it would be tedious and unnecessary to discriminate. One character among them I will, however, mention, as the painters of the Bolognese school appear to have been particularly fond of it; and also because they seem to have adopted it from their great model, Titian. It is that of a cluster of buildings rising one above another, and crowned by a maffive tower, which overlooks them all. Open arches are

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sometimes mixed with them, and sometimes an arch-way towards their centre. This sort of group is in two landscapes of Titian, which are etched by the famous landscape-painter of the Carach school, Gian. Fran. Grimaldi, called Il Bolognese; and therefore were probably favourite compositions.

There is hardly any landscape of a great master in which buildings are introduced, that will not furnish some useful hints, to those who wish to embellish real landscapes: but it would be irksome constantly to be pointing out, in what manner, and to what purposes, such hints might be applied; and would likewise break in too much on the principal subject. In this particular instance, however, of the two groups in the landscapes of Titian, I shall venture to make, what, I hope, will not be thought a useless digression.

As

As the buildings in those two groups are of various kinds—common dwellings and outhouses, as well as towers and turrets ; some with sloping, others with flat roofs—the principle upon which they are grouped and blended together, so as to produce a grand whole, in spite of the meanness of many of the particulars, well deserves attention. Whenever any mass of building is to be erected, whether a house with its offices, or a farm with its outbuildings, an opportunity presents itself, of producing what will be a striking feature from many points : the difference of expence in the mere outward form, where there are no ornaments, is trifling, when compared with the difference of effect. Those who are desirous of improving the landscapes of their place by means of buildings, ought surely to study what the great masters of landscape have done in various situations, and in various styles :

stiles: how they sometimes softened and disguised the too manifest symmetry of regular architecture, by blending it with other objects, and those not degrading ones; and at other times, ennobled meaner buildings by the help of some imposing mass, that fixed upon itself the principal attention. This last method is capable of frequent application: it often happens, for instance, that a small hamlet or some farm buildings are in an interesting situation, where the person from whose place they are in view, would wish for something more attractive. It is true, that a rich person to whom the whole belonged, might pull them all down, and build in their room a tower, a temple, or any other ornamental building: but, besides that there is something unpleasant, in destroying for the sake of mere ornament the marks of industry and habitation, such buildings of parade have too frequently a startling,

ing, unconnected, ostentatious appearance. Should he, however, choose to preserve the look of a farm or hamlet, but wish, at the same time, to improve the general mass, any building of a good form, rising higher than the rest from amidst them, would probably answer that purpose, and serve at once both to vary and unite the whole group; especially with the assistance of a few trees judiciously placed. There may be cases also, where an improver, with great property all round, may have only a small bit of ground in such a hamlet, and be unable to purchase any more: a building of the character I mentioned, might do all that a lover of painting would wish for, and give him a sort of property in the whole; and I know that manner of appropriating objects to be the source of much pleasure.

The last Italian painter, of whose architecture I shall have occasion to speak, is Pietro

da Cortona; who has been reproached as the corrupter of the Italian taste in painting. Corrupters in every way, have generally some attractions by means of which they are enabled to seduce, and those he by no means wanted. He is another example of the union of the two professions; for he was an architect of great reputation, and some churches in Rome built after his designs, are highly esteemed. The architecture in his pictures is enriched with a greater profusion of ornaments than that of almost any other master, but he has compensated that profusion (as far as it can be compensated) by a skilful arrangement of the parts, and a no less judicious combination of the whole. The qualities which he possessed, though they do not accord with the higher style of painting, or with the purest taste, are not to be despised when so eminently displayed; and the effect of richness,

richness, and grouping, cannot be better studied than in his works.

A striking contrast to his style in every branch of the art, may be taken from a nation and a school, generally thought to have a strong tincture of his merits, and his defects: it is hardly necessary to name N. Poussin. There is no master, whose works, both in history and landscape, afford so many studies for the higher styles of buildings, and for the use which may be made of them; for none ever more diligently studied their effect and character, as well as the character of the objects which they were to accompany. That severe and learned simplicity, which in his figures he had acquired by his studious imitation of the ancients, he was not likely to abandon in the other branches of the art: and as no painter was more sensible of the grandeur arising from strait lines, of those, as might naturally be expected, he has

made frequent use in architecture, to which they are so congenial. These principles are every where exemplified in his works, in which we never see the profuse ornaments of Pietro da Cortona, or the splendid incongruities of Paul Veronese; and that not for want of skill in the execution: for his touch, when he chose to introduce vases, foliage, masks, or other decorations, was not inferior to that of either of those masters. His Sacraments are models of that plainness and sobriety of architecture, which the subjects required: of that just medium, between a strict adherence to historical probability (which, in pictures, as in theatrical representations, must often be dispensed with) and a licentious abuse of an acknowledged privilege of poets and painters. In one of them, he has represented the same subject, which P. Veronese has treated in a picture already mentioned—that of the Magdalen anointing.

anointing the feet of our Saviour. The character, and the expression of the figures, are foreign to my present subject. The scene of the action, is in a spacious room enclosed on every side: the ornaments few and simple: in the centre, a recess with Ionic columns before it, and two niches on each side. In point of lightness and effect, of air and brilliancy, there can be no comparison between this picture, and that of P. Veronese at Genoa; but the one is addressed to the understanding through the sight, the other to the sight only; and who can doubt which has attained the noblest end?

In the landscapes of Poussin, there are more regular finished pieces of architecture, and those made principal objects, than in almost any other painter, Claude excepted, who brought them still nearer to the eye: the style of their architecture is, however, as different, as that of their landscapes; it

is the difference of male, from female beauty. In Poussin's buildings, the symmetry is often so perfectly undisguised; from their being placed directly opposite the eye without any effect of perspective, that many persons, if they were not checked by such authority, would pronounce, that no painter could make use of them in that manner: yet this great artist, who so well knew the value of strait lines, and of uniformity, has shewn with how much skill he could diversify the outlines of his buildings; when he saw occasion for it; and exchange the grandeur of simplicity, for that of splendid variety. One instance of this I shall now give, as it will illustrate and confirm what I have advanced on the subject of slanting roofs, and of their want of grandeur; and as it will likewise shew, what, in this great painter's idea, the general appearance of a magnificent city ought to be. The picture I allude to, was in

the

the Orleans collection ; the subject, the infant Moses exposed on the Nile. And here, though I wish to confine myself strictly to the design of my Essay, I cannot help saying a few words on the expression of the figures ; for more true, more varied and dignified expressions, are scarcely to be found in the whole compass of the art. The mother is represented, hardly enduring to push from the shore the little basket that holds her child : her face is turned from it ; and in that face, all a mother's agony is painted. The father is slowly walking from the scene ; a smothered grief in his countenance : but his hand, which clasps his drapery, seems more strongly to betray his feelings. Close behind, and clinging to him, is the elder boy : his head is turned round, and he looks back, as he walks, at the action of his mother, with an expression of anxious concern, terror, and uncertainty. So superior is the

interest arising from the human figure, and the expression of human passions, that when I first saw this composition, I hardly thought of the landscape, admirable as it is in every part. The back-ground, on account of which I have mentioned this noble work, is one of the richest I ever saw; it is the view of a magnificent city, mixed with trees, and backed with mountains: the principal buildings near enough to be distinct; distant enough to have the whole taken in at one view. The summits of them are most studiously varied, with domes, pyramids, obelisks, towers of different heights and shapes; but, among them all, not more than one sloping roof of the strait kind, strikes the eye within the town itself: without the walls indeed (perhaps as a foil, and a contrast to so much magnificence) he has placed a cottage with a simple sloping roof; still, however, varied by a projecting shed in front,

and

and another on the side. Paul Veronefe, also, in a picture of the finding of Moses, has given us his idea of a city, which perfectly accords with that of Poussin in the splendour and variety of the summits, and the absence of sloping roofs ; and Claude, in several of his pictures, has on similar occasions proceeded on the same principles.

As these great painters, in compositions where they clearly meant to express a magnificent assemblage of buildings, have studiously varied the outlines of their summits ; and, except in circular roofs such as domes, (where their effect is of a distinct character,) have avoided sloping roofs—it is a strong argument for varying the former, and avoiding the latter in every assemblage of buildings, whether it be a city with its numerous edifices, or a mansion with its appendages : in short, wherever the whole is intended to be magnificent in itself, and to adorn from different points the surrounding scenery.

Many

Many excellent examples of buildings connected with scenery, may be found, not merely in the works of Poussin, but in those of the principal French painters. In that school, however, there is such a diversity of styles, from extreme simplicity and severity, to as great licentiousness, that no general character of their buildings can well be given; but from that diversity, much instruction may be drawn, both as to what may be followed, and what should be avoided. The compositions of Le Sueur, Le Brun, (not to mention others of acknowledged merit,) are in high and general estimation; and very few of the great historical painters neglected architecture. The buildings of Sebastian Bourdon, particularly deserve to be cited, as very striking specimens of the union of grandeur and picturesqueness. One picture, in which this union is most happily exemplified, I have had frequent opportunities of examining, in the houses of its

its late, and present possessors: and, what is no slight advantage, have often heard their remarks upon it.* The subject is, the ark of the covenant on its progress, when it was recovered from the Philistines. It is represented in its passage over a bridge, on the opposite side of which are several figures; some of whose attitudes and countenances express profound awe and devotion, and others the most fervent enthusiasm. The bridge is built over a rapid river; at some distance higher up, stands a mill, in the management of which the painter has shewn the greatest skill and judgment. A mill, such as those which Ruyf dal, Waterlo, or

* It was left as a legacy to Sir George Beaumont, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, who thought that the grandeur of its style (which he always spoke of with admiration) was of so peculiar a cast, and so far removed from obvious common nature, as to be incapable of being truly relished, except by minds of strong original feeling, and long accustomed to contemplate the higher excellencies of the art. Such a legacy from such a man, is a panegyric

..... Distinct and clear
As any muse's tongue could speak.

Hobbima

Hobbima painted (excellent as they are in their kind,) would, on account of their broken forms, and strongly marked intricacy and irregularity, be ill suited to the solemnity of such a subject. Bourdon has, therefore, made the general form of the building of a more massive and uniform kind, though sufficiently varied; and at the same time that he has, with great truth, marked the intricacy of the wheels, and the effect of water in motion, he has kept the whole in such a mass of broad shadow, that nothing presses upon the eye, or interferes with the style of the picture: yet, on inspection, all the circumstances of intricacy, and motion, amuse the mind; and, what is the true character, and the use of the picturesque in such cases, relieve it from the monotony of mere breadth, massiveness, and uniformity.*

In

* There is a passage in some Essays on Painting, by Diderot, which very aptly illustrates this idea of the use and the limits of

In the works of many of the Dutch and Flemish masters, such as those whom I just mentioned, mills are among the truest specimens of the picturesque, unmixed with grandeur, or beauty ; and are therefore perfect in their kind. But there are other painters who have overshot the mark ; and as I have taken one instance of the most judicious conduct from a French master, I will mention another of an opposite kind, from the same school. There are two prints of views at Beauvais (one of them a mill) after Boucher, in which he seems to have collected together all the singularly abrupt and irregular forms that he had ever seen, in order to be superlatively picturesque ; and in the same proportion as

of the picturesque, in the higher style of the art. " Mais revenons à l'ordonnance et l'ensemble des personnages. On peut, on doit en sacrifier un peu au technique. Jusqu'où ? je n'en sais rien. Mais je ne veux pas qu'il en coûte la moindre chose à l'expression, à l'effet du sujet. Touche moi, étonne moi, déchire moi, fais moi tressaillir, pleurer, trembler, m'indigner d'abord, tu réécriras mes yeux après si tu peux."

Bourdon

Bourdon is less distinctly broken and intricate than Ruyfdal or Hobbima, Boucher is more so: the picture of the former, is a model of the use which may be made of the qualities of the picturesque; that of the latter, one the best examples I know, of their abuse.

The Flemish school owes its principal reputation in history painting to its illustrious head, Rubens; for Vandyke, whose historical pictures gave such just cause of jealousy to his master, forsook that higher branch of the art, and is more generally known as a portrait painter. There are others indeed, such as Diepenbeck Quellinus, de Vos, &c. who painted dignified subjects on a large scale, and whose works have no slight degree of merit, particularly in the ornamental part; but even there, where they most excelled, the interval is very great between them and Rubens. His architecture, like that of Paul Veronefe,

from

from whom he borrowed many of his ideas of magnificence and decoration, is in a high degree splendid ; but has less of that display of architectural symmetry, and of that lightness and elegance, which are so striking in the Venetian ; for the peculiar heaviness of the Flemish taste, so strongly marked in his figures, seems in particular instances, to have affected the character of his buildings. There is a well-known print after him, the title of which (*Le Jardin de L'Amour*) expresses the employment of the figures, and the place where they are assembled ; and certainly, if ever a light and airy style of architecture be proper, it must be peculiarly so, where the subject of the picture is gallantry, and the scene a garden. Had Parmeggiano painted a subject of this kind, as his figures would have been Sylph-like, he would have probably made any building which he might have chosen to introduce,

of

of the same aerial kind. Rubens in his garden, has represented the entrance to a sort of pavillion; the general character of which, and all the particular parts and ornaments are so massive, that if a palace of the Gnomes were to be represented, this might serve for its portal.

But although in the above-mentioned and other instances, his buildings, may justly be charged with heaviness, especially if compared with those of his model Paul Veroneſe, yet he compensated that occasional defect, by great and frequent beauties: for no master has combined such magical effects of light and shadow, with the richness and splendour of regular architecture; none has shewn such art in disguising that regularity, for the sake of picturesque disposition, without injuring the well-connected grandeur of the whole: and this might be exemplified from a number of his works.

From

From Rubens also, more than from any other painter, an architectural gardener might take examples, of the mixture of regular architecture with vegetation: as, for instance, of pilasters joined with trellisses; or of columns encircled by climbing plants. Sometimes on such occasions, he has made use of twisted columns, and, I think, with peculiarly good effect; for the waving lines of the columns, accord with those of the plants, which in return soften the defect of such columns, while they coincide with their undulating shape.

In his landscapes he appears to have paid as little attention to the shapes of his buildings, as he did to those of his trees; having sometimes placed the most vulgar forms of both, in his most sublime compositions. The great points at which he aimed, and in which he so admirably succeeded, were colour, and effect; and where they take possession of a

painter's mind, he seldom can prevail upon himself to reject, hardly to change the forms of those objects, on which those captivating qualities are eminently displayed.

I have hitherto chiefly dwelt on buildings of a higher kind, such as are used in historical pictures, or in the more elevated style of landscape; but in speaking of the rest of the Flemish painters, and of the Dutch school in general, my remarks will be confined to scenes and buildings of an humbler nature. In this sort of interval between the two styles, I shall make some observations on a part of architecture, which, though not very generally attended to in point of outward form, very materially affects the outline of all houses from the highest to the lowest. In our northern climate, every house on a large scale must have a number of chimnies, and in order to answer the purpose for which they are made, they must be

higher

higher than the general level of the summit: if, therefore, what I have said on the subject of summits be just, the appearance and effect of chimnies cannot be a matter of indifference. The outline of a building must depend upon the form, proportion, and distribution of the principal masses: in point of size, chimnies cannot come under that description, but they may in some degree, on account of their situation; by means of which they are themselves very conspicuous, and when viewed at some distance have a great influence on the outline of whatever part is immediately under them. When, for instance, in the near view of a house, you have admired the portico with its columns, the rich capitals, mouldings, and cornices, the balustrade that surrounds the top, the statues, urns, and vases, with which it is adorned—should you retire from it ten paces further, and then look back, you may, perhaps, see

several square unornamented funnels, sometimes with earthen pots upon them, peeping over the whole building, mixing themselves with all the rich ornaments, and occupying the highest station !

It cannot be denied, however, that there is no slight difficulty in the management of chimnies in buildings of pure architecture. With respect to their size, if they are made large enough to become principal masses, they lose that sort of congruity, which depends on the proportion of any object to its use: and if they are grouped together irregularly for the sake of picturesque effect, they offend against the symmetry which is required in architecture: yet, such small square masses, as we generally see, placed at regular distances from each other, have a poor, unconnected appearance.

On these points little or no assistance can be gained from pictures; I do not recollect,

at

at least, in those of the higher schools, to have seen any example of chimnies distinctly made out, where the building had any pretension to architectural beauty or grandeur.

Little more assistance can be gained from some of the most approved writers on architecture. Palladio, for example, is totally silent with regard to the outward form and effect of chimnies: others have slightly touched upon them; but there are others, again, who have given designs for them in such forms, as they judged would have more of variety, beauty, or grandeur, than the common ones; such as towers, obelisks, vases, &c.

In many of the old mansions of Gothic and mixed architecture, two or three chimnies are joined together in one cluster, with openings between them, but connected at the top; sometimes they are on the same line; at other times turned to different points:

frequently they are embellished with rich cornices, with spiral ribs, and other decorations. Although the same style will not suit the purer character of Grecian architecture, yet many of the circumstances on which the picturesque effect of such chimnies depends are not unworthy of notice: from their union they present a large mass, which however is lightened by means of the openings, and is often varied, by the parts of which it is composed being turned to different aspects: they are likewise well connected, and are formed into groups; they have a great play of light and shadow; and their enrichments accord with the decorated style of the main building. Vanbrugh has made great use of those circumstances at Blenheim, but he has indulged himself in his favourite propensity to the top of his bent, and, as it is observed by an eminent writer on architecture, has converted his chimnies into castles. He certainly had something

something gigantic in his turn of mind, and loved to pile Pelion upon Ossa: his castle-like chimnies are too vast and ponderous even for his building; but in the distant views, where their want of congruity is not apparent, they have a very rich and grand effect. The perfection of the art, is to give grandeur and effect, without heaviness, or licentiousness of style; but if I were obliged to determine between insipid congruity, and incongruity which produces striking effects, I should not hesitate in preferring the latter.

Chimnies are sometimes connected together by arches in purer architecture, and have the same sort of effect as the old Gothic ones, though of a less picturesque kind; the forms of towers are in most cases both grand and pleasing, and may be made to accord with every style of architecture; those of urns and vases are highly ornamental, and seem well suited to finished buildings

on a small scale : but in what manner, and in what cases the different methods of improving the appearance of chimnies may be applied, must be left to the judicious architect, whom I always suppose to be one who adds to the knowledge of his own art, a love for that of painting, and an acquaintance with its principles. Such an artist, I think, would be of opinion, that one of the first points in a building is the general outline, and that in country houses, the outline of the summit is not the least principal : that whatever will essentially improve that outline, can hardly be purchased by too great a sacrifice ; and that whatever tends to deform and disgrace it, cannot be too carefully avoided.

The old clustering chimnies, have in addition to their other merits, that of not assuming any other character : in some ancient mansions, however, chimnies have been made in the shape of columns ; but were there

there no other objection to them, the eye takes offence, when a form which it has been used to see appropriated to a particular purpose, is applied to another of so very opposite a nature. There is always indeed great danger, in running counter to ideas of utility and congruity, and in general to all associations of ideas ; yet when, by confining yourself to customary form and size, and to the exact limits of utility—in short to the congruity which regards the object itself—you destroy its congruity with the masses, the decorations, and the high finishing of the other parts—there, I think, the more narrow and partial congruity, should give place to one of a higher and more important nature.

Though in speaking of the Dutch school, (in which, after the example of Sir Joshua Reynolds, I mean to include those of the Flemish masters who painted similar subjects) few instances of architectural beauty or grandeur

grandeur will occur, yet it is certain, that many of the buildings which those masters have represented, though void of those two qualities, attract our attention in a high degree by means of others, which I have assigned to the picturesque. It may, perhaps, be thought, that the pleasure arises solely from the exact imitation of familiar objects, and that we again transfer to the objects themselves, the pleasure acquired from that imitation: this is a point on which some further discussion will by no means be useless in the present enquiry; and I am the more inclined to enter upon it, as Mr. Burke has but slightly touched upon it in his Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful.

He there proposes a rule, which, he observes, "may inform us with a good degree of certainty, when we are to attribute the power of the art, to imitation, or to our pleasure in the skill of the imitator merely; and when

when to sympathy, or some other cause in conjunction with it. When the object represented in poetry or painting is such as we could have no desire of seeing in the reality, then I may be sure that its power in poetry or painting is owing to the power of imitation, and to no cause operating in the thing itself. So it is with most of the pieces which the painters call still-life: in these a cottage, a dunghill, the meanest and most ordinary utensils of the kitchen, are capable of giving us pleasure.”*

This certainly does appear a very natural and just criterion; but still in some degree it implies an indifference with regard to the selection and arrangement of such objects, and seems to confine the whole scope of the painter’s exertions, and the effect they have on the spectator, within a very narrow limit—that of mere imitation. I am persuaded, however, that many of the

* *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*, Part 1st, p. 81. sec. 16.

Dutch masters have shewn as much choice and selection, with respect to those circumstances which struck them in mills, cottages, insides of kitchens, &c. as the higher Italian painters have displayed, in the arrangement of more dignified objects. It is true, they did not seek for elegance or grandeur; but they were painters, and as such, they could not help considering the disposition and character of such forms, and feeling strong motives of preference. The best succedaneums for elegance and grandeur, are variety and intricacy; and to these two qualities, many of the Dutch painters have paid the highest attention. There cannot be a more thorough boor than Ostade, and it might be concluded from the monsters he has painted by way of human figures, that he never thought of form in any objects; but let any one carefully examine, not merely his pictures, (for in them the excellence of his colouring might seduce the judgment,))

ment,) but the prints from them, and his etchings: they will then see how in the insides of kitchens, he has selected every circumstance that can vary the forms, and give intricacy to their disposition, without injuring the unity of the whole. The different degrees of fore-shortening in the rafters, in the half-opened doors and casements; the winding staircases seen only in part; chairs, tables, cradles, baskets, &c. all serve to vary the perspective, and form the most artful, yet the most natural groups: and the pots, pans, kettles, and all the various utensils are distributed with the same intention.

The outsides of his cottages are no less distinguished for their variety and intricacy. Their outline against the sky is generally composed of forms of unequal heights, thrown into many different degrees of perspective; the sides are varied by projecting windows and doors, by sheds supported by brackets,

brackets, with flower-pots on them; by the light, airy, and detached appearance of cages hung out from the wall; by porches and trellises of various constructions, often covered with vine or ivy: these, and many other picturesque circumstances, are so happily grouped with each other and with trees, that the bare outline would prove how much the eye may be pleased, and what skill may be shewn in the playful variety and intricacy of buildings and their appendages, where grace, elegance, and grandeur, are unthought of. But then, when it is considered, that this play and variety of outline, however pleasing, are not so much to be valued on their own account, as from being productive of what these painters most excelled in, variety and effect of light and shadow; that to these must be added their other great excellency, the management of colours; and that this infinite diversity of forms, colours,

lights

lights and shadows, must be so arranged, as to produce one whole in composition, and effect—it will shew, that it is not from mere imitation, but from great judgment in selecting and combining, as well as in executing, that our pleasure arises. The same principles of light and shadow, the same attention to the effects of variety and intricacy, which are so strongly displayed in the pictures of Ostade, may be traced even in those of Claude Lorraine; though in him the character of beauty infinitely prevails, and that of picturesqueness is only subordinate.

There can hardly be a stronger contrast than between a picture of Claude, and one of Ostade; but the contrast arises from the countries which they inhabited. Claude had constantly before his eyes, the most striking specimens of beauty, grandeur, and magnificence, both in art and nature; but it is by his skilful management of these materials,

terials, which lay open to a number of other artists, that he raised himself, though a mere landscape painter, almost to a level with history painters. Nothing can be more directly opposite than the character of his, and of Ostade's buildings; yet there is no slight resemblance in their manner of considering the effect of buildings in general, and in the use they made of those circumstances, which give most variety of outline, of tint, of light and shadow, without injuring the harmony and connection of the whole. The porches and posts of the one, answer those purposes as effectually, as the porticos and columns of the other; projecting roofs, sheds with brackets, and rails, have in another style, the effect of cornices and balustrades: the vulgar flower-pots of Ostade, take the forms of urns and vases in Claude: his winding staircases, of magnificent flights of steps; it is the fable of Baucis and Philemon.

Architecture is the divinity, that raises the porches of cottages and the rude posts that support them, into porticos and colonnades; but while it refines and ennobles, it necessarily takes off from that quickly-changing variety and intricacy of form, and that correspondent light and shadow, which are so striking in picturesque buildings, and which constitute and prove their distinct character. Such, indeed, must always be the effect of high polish and refinement, however judicious; and the same analogy prevails in language, in manners, in every thing with which the human mind is conversant. The pleasure we receive from beauty and nobleness of character, is more refined and exalted: but still there is a peculiar relish, which arises from the rude, and strongly marked abruptness and irregularity of picturesque circumstances, both in visible objects, and in all that has an analogy to them; and

that peculiar relish, as it does arise from those circumstances, cannot exist, or be equally powerful, where they are destroyed, or changed. Nor let it be imagined, that such a union of them as is displayed in the buildings of some of the Dutch masters is common: every old cottage will no more make a good Ostade, than every fine piece of architecture or ancient ruin in a beautiful country, will make a good Claude; and he who has been used to look at objects with a painter's eye, will be little less surprised (I do not say pleased) at finding a perfect Ostade in nature, than a perfect Claude.

Notwithstanding the great delight which Ostade seems to have taken, in representing all the picturesque circumstances of buildings, there is one painter who has sought after their varieties with still greater passion. Many of my readers will be surprised when I name Wouvermans. We have been used

to

to think of him chiefly as a painter of animals, and particularly horses, in which line he so eminently excelled; and when we consider the high finishing of his pictures, the extreme delicacy of his touch, and the manner in which he blended his colours, so as oftentimes to give too smooth an appearance to the general surface, it is difficult to imagine, that he, of all painters, should most diligently have searched for every broken and irregular form. Yet so it is, and in a degree that no one will conceive, who has not looked at his pictures and prints with that impression: and whoever wishes to gain an idea of the varieties of picturesque forms in the outsides of buildings (from which, however, the grand and beautiful remains of antiquity are excluded) will find that he has assembled them together in his works with all the passion of a collector of such objects, and all the skill of a painter in combining

them with each other. In this, as I conceive, lies a very principal difference between these two artists in respect to their buildings: Ostade seems to have chosen with great judgment; but, having made his choice, to have painted the objects, whatever they might be, with little variation. Wouvermans, on the other hand, appears to me to have collected all the scattered varieties that he met with, as materials for composition. The buildings, therefore, in Ostade have, as might be expected; a more striking air of naturalness; those of Wouvermans display more diversity, and greater ingenuity of combination.

It is very obvious, (although the example of Wouvermans, and even of Ostade, might make it doubtful) that a sharp, spirited touch, where the stroke of the brush remains, is most adapted to express broken irregular forms; and thence we might naturally

turally conclude, that Teniers (the sharpness and spirit of whose pencilling is almost proverbial,) would at least equal the painters whom I have just mentioned in the number and choice of those objects, which are so well adapted to shew the peculiar excellence of his execution. It is really surprising that the fact should be so exactly the reverse: the forms of his cottages, so far from being picturesque, are plain and common to such a remarkable degree, and so void of intricacy and variety, that he seems to have taken as much pains to shun all sudden breaks and irregularities, as other painters have taken to express them. This extreme plainness may, perhaps, be accounted for, by supposing him to have been influenced by the same motive on which I have supposed Gaspar to have acted; for he may have judged, that the even surface, and unbroken lines of his houses, would

give more effect to the sharp and varied touches on the objects in his fore-grounds. I am inclined, however, to think, that, independently of every other consideration, he preferred plain cottages, and that his taste did not lead him to search after, or to admire picturesque circumstances in any buildings: for when he did paint old-fashioned houses, or castles with singular turrets, he seems to have taken the whole, just as it presented itself; often very crudely, and without any of those softenings, disguises, or accompaniments of trees, or vegetation, or any of those changes and additions, which painters usually take the liberty of making. In this, again, the contrast between him and Wouvermans is very striking: Wouvermans had so accustomed his eye to that variety and play of outline, which arise from a mixture of vegetation with wood-work and masonry of every kind, that whatever

parts

parts of buildings he painted, whether common walls, roofs, and sheds, or garden walls with terraces and summer-houses; whether turrets, or mansions with porticos and columns, (for such, though not of a very pure architecture, he often introduced,) he never failed to adorn them, and to break and diversify their outline, by means of trees, shrubs, and climbing plants.

The known characteristic of Rembrant's style, is a strongly marked effect of light and shadow: he well knew, indeed, how to delineate their nicer transitions, yet he was less curious with regard to that detail which arises from sudden variety and intricacy of form, than Ostade or Wovermans. We often see in his pictures and prints very common-place forms of cottages, and other buildings; but they hardly appear so, on account of his peculiar management of light and shade, by which he contrived to raise

the character of vulgar objects, and to disguise that of raw and disgusting ones. This will clearly be perceived, if we compare his representations of such objects, with those of other painters who have great reputation in the same line. I have seen a butcher's shop by Teniers, painted with a truth that struck every observer, and with an execution that claimed the admiration of every artist. I have likewise seen a picture of the same subject by Rembrant, the execution of which was at least as masterly, and the representation of the principal circumstances, though less obviously and popularly natural, equally just. The Teniers perfectly exemplified Mr. Burke's distinction; the pleasure (mixed indeed with some disgust,) arose from the mere power of imitation. In the Rembrant, it arose from the artist's choice of such effects of light and shadow, as alone, (whatever the object might be) would raise our admiration;

admiration; and, likewise, from seeing those effects applied in such a manner, as to soften all the crudeness of objects in themselves disgusting, without destroying their naturalness. When he painted subjects of a higher and more serious kind, the buildings which he introduced, like the dresses of his figures, are capriciously invented, and of a style peculiar to himself. He troubled himself very little about their beauty, symmetry, or proportion; his aim was richness, and effect, which they are admirably calculated to produce: but however capricious and singular, they seldom appear frittered or unconnected; for those great principles of union and breadth, which he so eminently possessed, made him attend to the forms of objects, as far as those principles were concerned. His buildings, therefore, with all their singularities, have often an air of grandeur as well as of richness, which they would lose, if separated from all that accompanies them;

whereas

whereas the grandeur of those buildings which adorn the works of the great Italian masters, and of those who have formed themselves on their model, is intrinsic; and will bear to be considered singly.

I have endeavoured in a former part of this Essay, to point out the reason, why flanting roofs do not in general accord with splendid architecture; and have shewn, that some of the most eminent painters have avoided them in buildings of that description. Their general outline admits of little variation: I shall, however, mention a few observations on their surface, that have been communicated to me by a learned and ingenious friend, some of which relate to more polished buildings; but the general principle of improvement extends to every style. “The surface of flanting roofs must be nearly flat; decoration, therefore, is difficult: and though it is rough, when compared with the surface of columns or of hewn

stone in general, it has no effect of light and shadow: it has also a more unfinished look than any other part; a very material circumstance in whatever is to be combined with the highly-finished forms and ornaments of architecture. It remains to be considered, by what means these defects may be diminished. Few roofs of ancient buildings remain; in them, however, a peculiar attention seems to have been paid both to regularity of construction, and to light and shadow. The Tower of the Winds at Athens is covered with slabs of marble, in each of which the horizontal edge projects so much, as to give a strong shade; while the vertical joints are so elevated as to form high ribs, which break the uniform surface in a very beautiful manner.* The Lanthorn of Demosthenes

* An ancient anecdote mentioned by the Abbé Winkleman, records the first inventor of this kind of covering; and proves the great attention that the Greeks paid to the forms of their roofs,

mosthenes is roofed in the form of laurel leaves, which, in a different way, have the same effect. The ancient mode of tiling by semi-circular tiles laid within each other, gave a sort of fluted look to the roof; and the old flat tiles of the lower empire, which were joined with a high rib something in the way of the Temple of the Winds, had the same effect of light and shadow. Even the ridge and hip-rolls of our roofs, diminish in some degree the bareness of their appearance; and our pantiles, though much less picturesque than the hollow tiles of the ancients, are, perhaps, in point of form, the best material in use for common covering. The richness occasioned by these variations from uniformity of surface, is also very

roofs, by the manner in which they rewarded those who made any essential improvements in them.

“ Nell’ isola di Nasso fu eretta una statua a certo Biza, il quale avea il primo pensato a formare col marmo pentelico le tegole, onde coprirne gli edifizi.”

striking

striking in some of the old leaded roofs of our churches, where the sheets are small, and the rolls large: but it is still more so, when, as it sometimes happens, a part of the roof is repaired with slate, while the rest remains in its original state. The ancients seem to have had it in view to give both lightness and richness to their roofs, by a sort of lacing to the edges of them: the ridges as well as the eaves, were decorated with a sort of open work of small knobs or projections; and the same kind of ornament yet remains with peculiarly elegant effect, in many of our old churches and houses."

These and other ornaments and variations judiciously applied, would give a pleasing variety to sloping roofs of every kind; and to some of them (where the scale was not too large,) a degree of finished beauty worthy of being allied with the most polished architecture. But whatever changes or improvements

provements may be made in the appearance of such roofs by persons whose taste led them towards such objects, in general the common materials of the country, and the common method of using them, will of course be employed; and such uniformity and plainness are not only natural and proper, but give a zest to any deviations from them. There is an idea of rural simplicity annexed to a thatched cottage that is very much in favour of that covering; and indeed the appearance of new thatch, both from its neatness and colour, is remarkably pleasing. It is no less picturesque, when mossy, ragged, and funk in among the rafters in decay; a species of the picturesque, however, that has nothing to do with the improvement of houses or their roofs. But between the two periods of neatness and decay, particularly in the approach towards the latter, thatch has something of a damp dirty look; and,

what

what would often induce me to prefer tile or slate, that dampness is increased both in reality and appearance, by trees or climbing plants hanging or creeping over it : whereas any covering of a hard material, may without injury be half concealed by either of them ; and it rarely happens that there is any thing in the look of a covering, that could make one regret its partial concealment.

In all that relates to cottages, hamlets, and villages, to the grouping of them, and their mixture with trees and climbing plants, the best instruction may be gained from the works of the Dutch and Flemish masters ; which perhaps afford a greater variety of useful hints to the generality of improvers, and such as might more easily be carried into practice, than those grander scenes which are exhibited in the higher schools of painting. All the splendid effects

effects of architecture, and of assemblages of magnificent buildings, whether in cities, or amidst rural scenery, can only be displayed by princes, and men of princely revenues: but it is in the power of men of moderate fortunes, by means of slight additions and alterations, to produce a very essential change in the appearance of farm buildings, cottages, &c. and in the grouping of them in villages; and such effects, though less splendid than those of regular architecture, are not less interesting. There is, indeed, no scene where such a variety of forms and embellishments may be introduced at so small an expence, and without any thing fantastic, or unnatural, as that of a village; none where the lover of painting, and the lover of humanity, may find so many sources of amusement and interest.

A number of mere ornamental buildings, have very generally an air of profuse ostentation,

tation, and, at the same time, are apt to have a glaring, unconnected appearance: and indeed, however judiciously they may be placed and accompanied, they have a want of interest, from the very circumstance that they are designed for no other purpose than that of ornament: the mind does not feel entirely satisfied when that is the only purpose; it likes to consider ornament as an accessory, not as principal. An ancient temple, dedicated to a divinity of those times—that of Clitumnus on the bank of his own stream, sanctified by the supposed presence of the god, frequented by his worshippers, and decorated by their piety—was then an object of gay and festive devotion, and still continues to be looked at with an interesting veneration: but the sensation is comparatively cold, when ornament is itself the sole deity of every temple. I by no means intend by this to condemn such buildings;

magnificence cannot be better displayed in extensive gardens and pleasure grounds, than by giving scope to the inventions of rising geniuses in architecture, or by shewing us, on a large scale, the real appearance of those ancient buildings, which we have admired in pictures, prints and drawings: but I could wish to turn the minds of improvers, from too much attachment to solitary parade, towards objects more connected with general habitation and embellishment. Where a mansion-house and a place upon a large scale, happen to be situated as close to a village, as some of the most magnificent seats in the kingdom are to small towns, both styles of embellishment might be adopted; far from interfering, they would add to each other's effect, and it may be truly said, that there is no way in which wealth can produce such natural unaffected variety, and such interest, as by adorning a real village,

and

and promoting the comforts, and enjoyments of its inhabitants.*

Goldsmith has most feelingly described (more, I trust, from the warmth of a poetical imagination and quick sensibility, than from real fact) the ravages of wealthy pride. My aim is to shew that they are no less hostile to real taste, than to humanity; and should I succeed, it is possible that those, whom all the affecting images and pathetic touches of Goldsmith would not have restrained from destroying a village, may even be induced to build one, in order to shew their taste in the decoration and disposition of village-houses and cottages.

* Nothing ever so strongly impressed me with the vacancy of solitary grandeur and power, and the disgust that attends the eternal sameness of artificial scenery and manners, as the sham towns and villages made to divert the Emperor of China; in which the various incidents of real life (not selected and compressed as in dramatic representation) are acted by Eunuchs.

- As human vanity is very fond of new creations, it may not be useless to observe, that to build an entirely new village, is not only a more expensive undertaking than to add to an old one, but that it is, likewise, a much more difficult task to execute it with the same naturalness and variety of disposition; and that it is hardly possible to imitate those circumstances of long established habitation, which, at the same time that they suggest pleasing reflections to an observing mind, are sure to afford delight to the painter's eye.

An obvious and easy method of rebuilding a village (and one which unfortunately has been put in practice) is to place the houses on two parallel lines, to make them of the same size and shape, and at equal distances from each other. Such a methodical arrangement saves all farther thought and invention; but it is hardly necessary to say,

say, that nothing can be more formal and insipid. Other regular plans of a much better kind have been proposed; but it seems to me, that symmetry, which in cities, and generally in all the higher styles of architecture produces such grand effects, is less suited to humbler scenes and buildings.

The characteristic beauties of a village, as distinct from a city, are intricacy, variety, and play of outline; and whatever is done, should be with a design to promote those objects. The houses should, therefore, be disposed with that view, and should differ as much in their disposition from those of a regularly built city, as the trees which are meant to have the character of natural groups, should from those of an avenue. Wherever symmetry and exact uniformity are introduced, those objects which produce a marked intricacy and variety must in general be sacrificed. In an avenue, for in-

stance, sudden inequalities of ground, with wild groups of trees and bushes, which are the ornaments of forest scenery, would not accord with the prevailing character. In the same manner where a regular street or a square are to be built, all inequalities of ground, all old buildings, however picturesque, will injure that symmetry of the whole, which must not (except on extraordinary occasions) be sacrificed to particular detail. Now, in a village, all details, whether of inequality of ground, of trees and bushes, or of old buildings of every kind, not only are in character, but serve as indications, where, and in what manner, new buildings may be placed, so as at once to promote both variety and connection.

There is no scene where neatness and picturesqueness, where simplicity and intricacy can be so happily united as in a village; or

where

where they may be so well contrasted without any affectation or impropriety. Should there be a house of an old style, in which not only the forms were of a picturesque irregularity, but the tints were of that rich mellow, harmonious kind, so much admired by painters—an improver who had ever studied pictures, would not suffer them to be destroyed by plaster or white-wash. Another house might have something of the same character in respect to form; but instead of displaying the same variety of well-mixed tints, might only look smeared and dirty; in that case a sober white-wash, would add neatness and evenness of colour to diversity of form. If there were many irregular old houses, any new one that was wanting might be perfectly simple; but as there is an essential difference between those tints which painters admire, and mere dirtiness of colour, so there is as essential a difference

between what is simple, and what is bald. Baldness of effect, in all objects, arises from want of shadow; but many circumstances that produce depth of shadow, such as projecting roofs, porches, windows that are recessed, are perfectly consistent with simplicity and uniformity.

The forms of chimnies are not less to be attended to in village-houses, than in those on a larger scale; and in some respects still more so: for although any poverty of form gives greater offence when mixed with the beauty and splendour of architecture, yet, in low houses, the good or bad effect of chimnies is more immediately striking, as they are nearer the eye, and larger in proportion to the building. In old village-houses they have often the same picturesque character, and many of the same decorations, with those of the ancient mansions already described; and, indeed,

seem

seem to have been copied from them. These, and a great variety of other forms, differing in a number of circumstances, and all of them with some marked characteristic distinction, are to be found both in pictures, and in real buildings; and I have often had occasion to observe the amusing effect of that diversity in villages, and, on the other hand, the opposite effect of monotony of the worst kind. One instance of the latter I mention with regret, as the houses were in a great measure either rebuilt or repaired by the gentleman who lives within a short distance of the place, and who, in the two most essential points of neatness and comfort, has great reason to be proud of what he has done: but the chimnies are all single, tall, and thin; and I could not help lamenting that an undertaking, which in other respects deserved so much praise, should have produced the most wretched, meagre outline I

ever

ever beheld. It is the more provoking, as the village is beautifully backed with trees, which serve to shew with perfect distinctness all these long detached tubes. The opposite extreme in some of the old stone chimneys, which are built as massively as towers, is more suited to the lover of painting; who might in particular cases, be induced to build a chimney of that kind, where something of a massive character seemed to be wanting in the composition: a new, but by no means an unentertaining way of considering every part of a building.

Trees, whether single or in groups, whether young or old, are obviously of the greatest use in accompanying buildings of every kind; but there seems to be a much closer union between them and low buildings. Cottages appear to repose under their shade, to be protected, sometimes supported by them; and they, on the other hand, hang over and embrace

embrace the cottage with their branches: it seems as if they could never have been separate from each other; and there would be a sort of cruelty in dividing them. If trees thus adorn the cottage, that, in return, by the contrast of its form and colour, no less enhances the peculiar beauties of vegetation, and often fixes the attention on trees, which in other situations would be unnoticed. No wonder, then, if we are particularly struck with any of the beautiful exotics when so placed; with an acacia, a pine, a cedar, that shade part of a village-house; with an arbutus, or a cluster of lilacs, over-topping the wall, or the pales of its garden. In these cases, besides the real and less familiar beauty of such trees and shrubs, and the effect of contrast, there is another circumstance that helps to attract and fix our attention; they are separated from that infinite variety of similar productions, which constitutes

constitutes a principal merit and defect of shrubberies, and collections of exotics.

But though trees and shrubs of every kind have a peculiar and distinguished effect, in consequence of accompanying, and being accompanied by, the houses of a village, there is another tribe of plants which gains still more by such a situation, and which indeed no other can shew to such advantage; I mean the various sorts of climbing plants. All of them in their native soils, and in their wild state, twist themselves round trees or bushes, mixing their foliage with that of their supporters, enriching their summits, or hanging in festoons from their branches; nor can any thing be more beautiful than such a union. But of the exotic kinds, few among those that endure the open air, will bear the drip of trees so as to flourish amidst their boughs: they therefore are generally seen nailed against a flat wall, or supported

by

by a pole; neither of which are very favourable to their effect. As almost all of them require a free circulation of air, many of them warmth and shelter, the best situation, in regard both to their health and effect, seems to be a projection from a building. Porticos of regular architecture, are too costly to be made supporters of climbing plants, however beautiful their union might be; and the same thing may in general be said of temples and ornamental buildings, in gardens and pleasure grounds. Other buildings might very well be made expressly for that purpose; but it would be difficult to contrive such a variety of supports of different characters, as may be found in a village; or which, if not found there, may always be added to the houses of it. A great diversity of sudden and singular projections is to be met with in all old houses that have been added to at different times; but what

what I principally allude to, are porches, of which so many models may be taken, both from real buildings, and from pictures. Wherever honeysuckles, vines, jasmines, grow over them, they attract and please every eye; and the same sort of beautiful effect (not indeed more beautiful) would be produced by the less common exotic climbers.

It seldom happens that the taste of the mere collector of curious plants, and that of the picturesque improver, can be made to accord so well as in this instance. Village-houses generally afford many warm aspects and sheltered situations, where the less hardy climbers will flourish, and of course a still greater number of more exposed walls and projections, against which those that are perfectly hardy may be placed: and from the irregular shape of many of the houses, there are various divisions

visions and compartments of various sizes and heights, by means of which a collector of climbing plants might arrange them, according to their different degrees of hardness and luxuriancy; so that while he was indulging his favourite passion, he would be adding the most engaging ornaments, to the most pleasing of all rural scenes. In all climbing plants, there is so much beauty arising either from their flowers, their foliage, or from their loose and flexible manner of growing, that no arrangement could well prevent them from giving pleasure to the lover of painting, as well as to every spectator: for the detail would be in a high degree interesting, whether the plants were considered in a botanical light, as detached flourishing specimens; or in a picturesque light, as exhibiting a variety of new combinations of form and colour: the different vegetable tints being sometimes blended

with

with the rich mellow hues of old stone or wood-work; sometimes with the neatness of the fresh colours of new work. Sometimes too the more light and delicate leaves and brilliant flowers would appear alone; at other times mixed and twined with large broad leaves: either jagged and deeply indented, such as the vine; or entire as those of the aristolochia.

Though I have particularly dwelt upon the beauty of climbing plants, I do not mean that no others ought to be made use of in such situations as I have described. Where there are brick houses in villages, we sometimes see fruit-trees against them, while honeysuckles or jasmines are trained over the porch or the trellis before the door. This mixture of utility with ornament, of that which is nailed close to the wall, with what hangs loosely over a projection, forms a pleasing variety; indeed, fruit-trees, which in

every

every situation give the chearfullest ideas, are peculiarly adapted to villages; for as they exhibit both in spring and autumn a striking image of fertility, they are the propereſt, and indeed the most usual accompaniments to habitation. Considered, likewise, in another point of view, they are ſeldom ſeen to ſuch advantage in other ſituations: the effect of bloffoms, however gay and chearful, is often, in painters' language, ſpotty and glaring; but I have frequently obſerved, that when they were ſeen near ſtone buildings or houses of a light colour, the whole (to uſe the ſame language) was upon the ſame ſcale of colouring, and produced a highly brilliant, but harmonious picture. Should the taste of improvers be turned towards the embellishment of villages, a variety of ſuch ſtandard fruit-trees might be introduced, as are remarkable in their diſferent kinds, not only for their goodness,

but for the beauty of their blossoms and fruit.

It might not perhaps be expected that a lover of painting and of picturesque circumstances, should speak of trees nailed close to a wall, and still less of clipped hedges, as objects that are pleasing to the eye: it is certain, however, that both of them do give pleasure, though upon a totally different principle from a tree in its untouched luxuriant state, bending with the weight of its fruit; or from a neglected hedge with trees and bushes of various heights, and overgrown with ivy and woodbine. The fact is, that neatness and regularity are so connected with the habitation of man, that they almost always please on a small scale, and where that connection is immediate: especially when they are contrasted with what is wild and luxuriant, without being slovenly. A hedge that has been so carefully and regularly trained and sheared

as

as to be of equal thickness from top to bottom, gives pleasure also, from its answering so perfectly the end for which it was designed : on the other hand, where there is a wall, climbing plants may be allowed to spread over it in all their luxuriancy ; for they adorn, without injuring it as a fence.

The building which gives most consequence to a village, and distinguishes it from a mere hamlet, is the church. That forms its most conspicuous feature at a distance, and often in the near view a central point, round which the houses are irregularly disposed. Indeed, the church, together with the church-yard, is, on various accounts, an interesting object to the villagers of every age and disposition : to the old and serious, as a spot consecrated to the purposes of religion, where the living christian performs his devotions, and where, after death, his body is deposited near those of his ancestors, and departed

friends and relations: to the young and thoughtless, as a place where, on the day of rest from labour, they meet each other in their holiday clothes; and also (what forms a singular contrast with tombs and grave-stones,) as the place which at their wakes, is the chief scene of their gaiety, and rural sports. Of the most conspicuous part of churches there are various forms; among which, none is, perhaps, more suited to a village, than that which occurs in the often-quoted lines of Milton—a tower with battlements. A tower, in its most simple, unvaried, unornamented state, always strikes and pleases the eye; it also admits of a high degree of ornament. The battlement is the simplest break to the uniformity of a mere wall; it is sufficient to give variety to the summit, without injury to its massiveness. On the other hand, pinnacles and open work, such as are seen in many of the towers

of

of our cathedrals, are the most striking specimens of richness and lightness, both of design and execution. They are, however, on account of that richness, less suited to a village than to a city, yet will not bear to be simplified; for where a plain pinnacle is placed on each corner of a tower, the whole has a very meagre appearance: indeed, when we consider, what are the chief characteristics of the style of architecture to which they belong, plain simple Gothic, is almost as great a contradiction, as plain simple intricacy and enrichment.* Battlements are not liable to the same objection as pinnacles,

for

* The same idea has occurred to me, in looking at the excellent representations of eastern buildings, which within a few years have been published. In many of those buildings, the whole taken together gives a striking impression of richness and magnificence; and the manner in which they generally are raised on a platform, so as never to appear rising crudely, and without any preparation from the ground, together with other circumstances in the arrangement of the parts, may afford useful hints to architects of every country: but were all the ornaments to be removed, and the naked building to remain, the want of

for their effect, though simple, is never meagre. The battlemented tower admits, also, of many picturesque additions, such as turrets rising above, or projecting beyond the main body, most of which additions and variations were probably taken from similar ones in the ancient castles.*

The spire has its own peculiar beauty, though of a very inferior kind to that of the

more perfect design and studied proportion, would be very glaring. Grecian Architecture, on the other hand, admits indeed of the richest ornaments, and is beautiful when so decorated; but such is the well-studied proportion and arrangement of its forms, that in one sense it may be said to be more beautiful without ornaments. I have sometimes been so pleased with the effect of great simplicity in buildings of that style, as to apply to Grecian architecture in general, what was so happily said of a beautiful woman—

Induitur formosa est; exuitur, ipsa forma est.

* The well-known passage in Milton,

“ Towers and battlements it sees

“ Bosom'd high in tufted trees,”

has, I believe, been most commonly supposed to refer to churches of that form; but I should rather conceive that it alludes to a castle; a more suitable, because a more romantic habitation for the “Cynosure of neighbouring eyes,” than a village or a town.

tower; yet there are situations, where the spire, on account of its height, and for the sake of variety, may have the preference: but as its beauty consists in its height, its gradual diminution, and its connection with the base, nothing can be more absurd than a short spire stuck upon a tower, and that by way of ornament.

A church, like other buildings, is greatly improved by the immediate accompaniment of trees; and luckily few church-yards are without them. The yew, which is the most common in that situation, is from the depth and solemnity of its foliage, the most suited to it, and is, indeed, as much consecrated to the dead, as the cypresses among the ancients. Whatever trees are planted in a church-yard, whether evergreens or deciduous, it is clear that they should be of a dark foliage: evergreens, therefore, as more solemn, in general deserve the pre-

ference; and there seems to be no reason why in the more southern parts of England, cypresses should not be mixed with yews, or why cedars of Libanus, which are perfectly hardy, and of a much quicker growth than yews, should not be introduced. In high romantic situations particularly, where the church-yard is elevated above the general level, a cedar, spreading his branches downwards from that height, would have the most picturesque, and at the same time the most solemn effect.

The last finishing charm of a village scene, as of all others, is water; and though there is no character of water which will not add an interest to whatever is connected with it, yet a brook seems to be that, which most perfectly accords with the scale and character of a village. In the same degree also, the simple construction of a bridge which has been already mentioned, formed by flat stones

stones laid on more massive ones, agrees with the character of a brook: indeed it generally happens that the rude efforts of inexperienced man (particularly on a small scale) have something more attractive, and what is very justly called picturesque, than that which is done by the more regular process of art; such a bridge, for instance, whether of wood or stone, than one of a small arch.

Where the country abounds with quarries, I have often seen large flat stones placed on others for the purpose of washing, just in the same manner as those of the rude bridges, and near to one of them. These have their effect to the painter's eye, merely as objects in the fore-ground, so perfectly in character with all that is near them: but they are more interesting, on account of the number of picturesque circumstances which the purpose they are intended for gives rise to; and, therefore, trifling as they may appear,

pear, are not unworthy the attention of an improver. There is no situation in which they are not interesting to the lover of painting; but I remember to have been particularly delighted with a scene of this kind, close by the road side in a romantic country, and at a short distance from a town. It was a place where a small cascade had worn a basin in the natural rock: I came suddenly upon it at a turn of the road; it was almost surrounded by women busily employed, but gaily laughing, talking and singing, amidst the noise of beating clothes, and the splashing of the water. Some of the clothes were spread out on the low rocks near the basin, and partly hanging down their sides; others were in bundles on the ground, or on the heads of those who were carrying them away; while their different shapes, folds, and colours, the actions and expressions of the women, the clearness and various motions of the water, the whole seen on a beautiful summer

summer evening, made the greatest impression on me as a picture; but it also struck me as the most delightful image of peace and security, and brought to my mind the well-known lines of the great poet, in which he has introduced that image with the most powerful and tender effect. It is in that interesting part, where, as Achilles is pursuing Hector, they come to the two fountains of Scamander.

Ἐνθα δ' επ' αυτῶν πλυνοι εὐρεῖς εὔγυς εκτι
Καλοί, λαμπεοι, οθι ἐμπατχ σιγαλοεντά
Πλυνεσκον Τρωῶν αλοχοι, καλαι τε θυγατρες,
Τοπριν επ ειρηνης, πριν ελθειν νιας Αχαιων.

Iliad, lib. 21. l. 153.

May we never feel the full pathos of this affecting passage.*

I may,

* Pope's translation of this passage, though the lines are very pleasing, is far from having the pathos of the original.

Each gushing fount a marble cistern fills,
Whose polish'd bed receives the falling rills;
Where Trojan dames, e'er yet alarm'd by Greece,
Wash'd their fair garments in the days of peace.

The difference, I believe, arises in a great degree, from the different arrangement of the circumstances. In Homer, all the descriptive

I may, perhaps, be thought by many of my readers, to have indulged myself too long in my passion for village scenery. I must repeat as my excuse, what I said when I first entered on the subject, that “there is no scene where such a variety of forms and embellishments may be introduced at so small an expence, and without any thing fantastic or unnatural, as in a village; and where the lover of painting, and the lover of humanity, may find so many sources of amusement and interest.” All the liberal arts are justly said to soften our manners, and not suffer them to be fierce and savage. None, I believe, has a juster claim to that high praise, than the art of painting. Whoever has looked with delight at Gainsbo-

descriptive part comes first, while the reflection is entirely reserved to the last; an art (if such it may be called, where there is no appearance of any) of which there are other striking instances in that great father of poetry. The word *alarmed*, also, does not express, what is clearly expressed in the original, the actual invasion of the country.

rough's

rough's representations of cottages and their inhabitants; at Greuze's interesting pictures; at the various groups and effects in those of the Dutch masters, will certainly feel from that recollection, an additional delight in viewing similar objects and characters in nature: and I believe it is difficult to look at any objects with pleasure (unless where it arises from brutal or tumultuous emotions) without feeling that disposition of mind, which tends towards kindness and benevolence: and surely whatever creates such a disposition, by encreasing our pleasures and enjoyments, cannot be too much cultivated.

I have just mentioned Gainsborough's pictures; when he lived at Bath, I made frequent excursions with him into the country. He was a man of an eager irritable mind, though warmly attached to those he loved; of a lively and playful imagination, yet at times severe and sarcastic; but I have frequently remarked, that when we came to

cottage

cottage or village scenes, to groups of children, or to any objects of that kind which struck his fancy, his countenance would take an expression of particular gentleness and complacency. I have often too observed Sir Joshua Reynolds, when children have been playing before him; the most affectionate parent could not gaze at them with a look more expressive of kindness and interest. He was indeed the mildest and most benevolent of men; but in that look was clearly expressed the mixture of interest which arose from his art, and which seemed to give additional force to his natural philanthropy.

With respect to the particular subject of this Essay, although by the study of pictures a man will gain but little knowledge of architecture as a science, yet, by seeing the grandest and most beautiful specimens of that art displayed in the most favourable points of view, and most happily grouped with

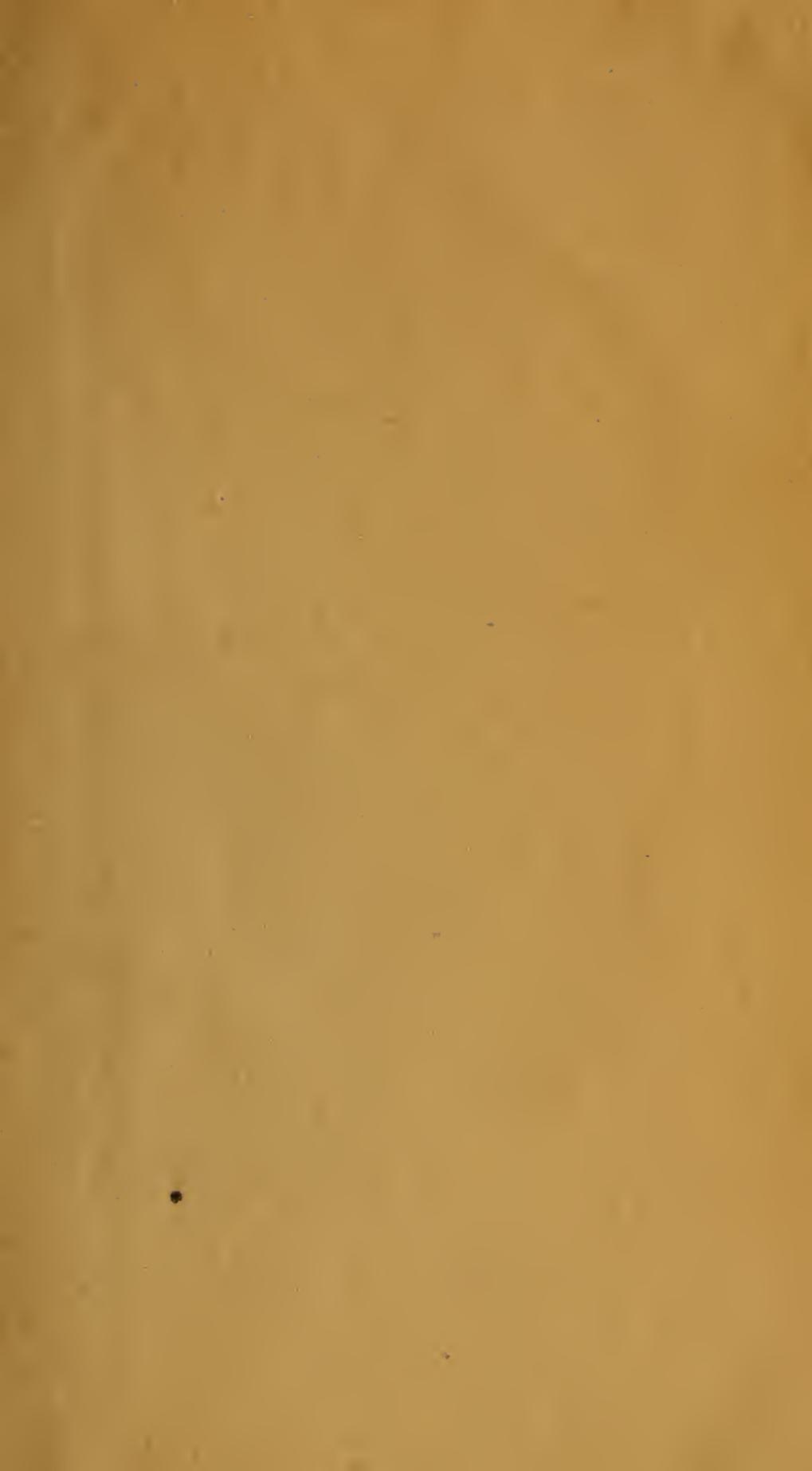
with each other and with the surrounding objects, he may certainly acquire a just idea of their forms and effects, and their connection with scenery. He will also gain a knowledge, not easily acquired by any other means—that of the infinitely diversified characters and effects of broken and irregular buildings with their accompaniments; and of all that in them, and in similar objects is justly called picturesque, because they belong to pictures, and to the productions of no other art.

The more I reflect on the whole of the subject, the more I am convinced, that the study of the principles of painting in the works of eminent painters, is the best method of acquiring an accurate and comprehensive taste and judgment, in all that regards the effects and combinations of visible objects; and thence I conclude, that unless we are guided by those enlarged principles, which instead of confining our ideas to the peculiar and ex-

clusive

clusive modes of one nation, or one period, direct our choice towards whatever is excellent in every age and every country—we may indeed have fine houses, highly polished grounds and gardens, and beautiful ornamental buildings, but we shall not have that general combination of form and effect, which is by far the most essential point; which makes amends for the want of particular beauties, but the absence of which, no particular beauties can compensate.

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